

RUSSIAN Breakup

**Gorbachev to Yeltsin
and then until Putin**



1985 - 2004

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§ 4. National politics and national movements. 1964-1985

The adoption of the new The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) Program in 1961 marked the beginning of a new stage in the development of national relations in the country. Its main features were seen in the further rapprochement and achievement of the "complete unity" of the nations. It was assumed that the construction of the material and technical base of communism leads to an even closer unification of the ancient peoples. The exchange of material and spiritual wealth between nations is becoming more and more intensive, and the contribution of each republic to the common cause of communist construction is growing.

The blurring of lines between classes and the development of communist social relations strengthen the social homogeneity of nations, contribute to the development of common communist features of culture, morality and everyday life, and further strengthen mutual trust and friendship between them. With the victory of communism in the USSR, there will be an even greater rapprochement of nations, their economic and ideological commonality will increase, and the common communist features of their spiritual appearance will develop. However, the erasure of national differences,

especially language differences, is a significantly longer process than erasing class distinctions*.

The party undertook to carry out a national policy designed to regulate national relations at a new stage of their development from the standpoint of proletarian internationalism, on the basis of... Lenin's national policy, not allowing "neither ignoring nor inflating national peculiarities".

The most important goal of this policy was to "continue" to ensure the de facto equality of nations and nationalities "with full consideration for their interests, paying special attention to those areas of the country that need more rapid development". The benefits that grew in the process of communist construction were promised to be "fairly distributed among all nations and nationalities."

However, the "extensive construction of communism" in the country did not last long. In November 1967, L. I. Brezhnev announced that a developed socialist society had been built in the USSR, and that in the future it was necessary to improve it, and that communist goals were being pushed beyond the limits of the foreseeable historical horizon. The new authorities also abandoned other methodological innovations of the Khrushchev period. However, the position of the new historical community was preserved and further developed. The report of the Central Committee of the party to the XXIII Congress (March-April 1966) contained a refined wording about the Soviet people. The term "multinational Soviet people" was used. This excluded the possibility of identifying the "new community" and "complete unity of

nations" with a new communist nation, supposedly forged from traditional ethnic groups and replacing them. Leftist interpretations of the new community were criticized and muted.

The statement about the supposedly fully formed new historical community in the USSR was contained in the speeches of the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee at the XXIV (1971) and XXV (1976) party congresses. In the development of this position, the IML under the Central Committee of the CPSU prepared and published in two editions the book "Leninism and the nation in Russia in modern conditions" (1972, 1974), which gave an official description of the phenomenon. The book explained: "The Soviet people are not a new nation, but a historical, broader than a nation, a new type of community of people, covering all the peoples of the USSR.

The concept of the "Soviet People" appeared as a reflection of the fundamental changes in the essence and appearance of the Soviet nations, an expression of their comprehensive rapprochement, the growth of their international features. But even with the close interweaving of the international and the disgraced in the socialist nations, the latter form the Soviet people, while at the same time remaining its national components, the consolidation of the "new historical community" was the most important goal of state national policy. During the 70-80s, the country published a myriad of books and statistics designed to create the appearance of well-being and success in the implementation of the "Leninist national policy".

The appearance of the movement of theoretical thought was created by works full of sophisticated scholasticism, which interpreted the relationship between the flourishing, convergence and fusion of nations, national and international, and the nature of internationalist processes in society.

Reviving National Consciousness

In reality, the gap between science, politics, and life was widening. The reviving national consciousness was treated as a manifestation of nationalism. The real contradictions of national life and interethnic relations were ignored. "Naziology" in the conditions of "developed socialism" became noticeably more active on festive dates in connection with party congresses, anniversaries of the October Revolution and the formation of the USSR. This could not but leave the imprint of "zazdravnost" («заздравности» prodigious, proverbial) on a significant part of the works devoted to national issues.

The new historical community of people in the USSR was not only a created myth, but also a reality. In the current mass media and information, the recognition that there was and really were Soviet people is purely identified only with a kind of inferiority (hence the contemptuous "scoop"). However, this does not negate the fact that at the level of public reflection, there was a sense of "soviet-skonarodgy". Football fans of different nationalities were rooting for "their own" - Dynamo Kyiv and Tbilisi, Ararat Yerevan, for "our" Soviet cosmonauts, regardless of their nationality. In other words, there was

definitely a substantial space with a civil rather than an ethnic basis. In this regard, it is hardly necessary to evaluate only the CFC "national nihilism" the position of the authors of the letters in the editorial board of the Shzet during the discussion of the Constitution of the USSR of 1977, in which it was proposed to record in the passports — "nationality: Soviet; native language: Armenian".

It is hardly necessary to put the brand "chauvinist" to those who considered it necessary to supplement Art. 36 of the draft Constitution with the phrase: "It is prohibited to require the disclosure of information about one's nationality and any official documents (passports, certificates, tickets, personal questionnaires, etc.)." Thus, the Chechen people "tried to weaken the" nation-preserving " parameters of the official documents for the sake of strengthening the "markings" of belonging to the general civil, political community of the Soviet people. In the post-Soviet period, there are still many authoritative scholars who continue to convince, as, for example G. Kara-Murza said that "according to all modern ideas about the state and the nation, the Soviet people were a normal multi-ethnic nation, no less real than the American, Brazilian or English nations." Of course, the degree of "Sovietism" was different for different groups of the population, but a single economy, a single school and a single army made the Soviet people much more united than the secret multi-ethnic nations.

A convincing argument in favor of the reason for the existence of such a community is the growing number of ethnically mixed marriages — the internationalization of the most intimate family-personal sphere. The population

census of 1959 recorded 50.3 million families in the country, of which 10.3% were mixed nationally. By 1970, mixed families accounted for 13.5%; in 1979, 14.9%; and in 1989, 17.5% (12.8 million out of 77.1 million families). Behind each of the spouses there were usually groups of relatives, who thus repeatedly increased the number of people of different nationalities who were related to each other.

The census data also spoke about the formation of a new community, namely, about a significant number of non-Russian people who recognized Russian, the language of interethnic communication, as their "native" language. According to the census of 1926, 6.4 million such people were recorded; in 1959— 10.2; in 1979— 13; in 1989, there were already 18.7 million. If the process of transition to Russian was not quite natural and voluntary, then the vast majority of them would not call it "native", limiting themselves to indicating "fluency" in it. The population censuses also showed a constant increase in the number of people who use Russian fluently, along with their native national language. In 1970, 241.7 million people lived in the USSR (53.4% of them were Russian). By 1989, their number had increased to 286.7 MLPs; among them, Russians by nationality numbered 145.2 (50.6%). In Russia in 1989, Russians made up 81.5% of the 147.4 million inhabitants. At the same time, Russian was considered the native language and was fluent in it by 81.4% of the population of the USSR and 88% of the population of Russia.

The Constitution adopted in 1977 characterized the "developed socialist society" built in the USSR as a

society "in which a new historical community of people — the Soviet people-emerged on the basis of the rapprochement of all social strata, the legal and de facto equality of all nations and nationalities."

The people proclaimed the one Soviet people is the main subject of power and law-making in the country. "The power in the USSR belongs to the people. The people exercise state power through the Councils of People's Deputies. All other state bodies are controlled and accountable to the Soviets," says Article 2 of the new Constitution. Other articles declared the equality of citizens regardless of race and nationality (Article 34); claimed that "the country's economy is a single national economic complex" (Article 16); the country has a "single system of public education" (Article 25). At the same time, the Basic Law of the country stated that "every union republic retains the right to freely secede from the USSR" (art. 72), each union autonomous republic has its own Constitution, which takes into account the "peculiarities" (Articles 76, 82), the territory of the republics "cannot be changed" without their consent (Articles 77, 83), "the sovereign rights of the union republics are protected by the Union of the SSR" (Article 81).

Thus, " Soviet the "people" in the Constitution appeared to be united in words, but actually cut into various "sovereign" and "special" parts. The latter also corresponded to the spirit of the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, which was not repealed by anyone, which proclaimed at the dawn of Soviet power (November 2, 1917) not only "the equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia", but also their right

to "free self-determination up to the separation and formation of an independent state".

The researchers identified nations, nationalities, ethnic and national groups that clearly differ in the possibilities of exercising their sovereignty in a single "new historical community". M. I. Kulichenko, in his work "Nation and Social Progress" (1983), believed that out of the 126 national communities recorded during the processing of the materials of the 1959 census, 35 nationalities belonged to the category of nations, 33 to nationalities, 35 to national groups, and 23 to ethnic groups. Of the 123 communities identified by the 1979 census, 36 were classified as nations, 32 as nationalities, 37 as national groups, and 18 as ethnic groups. But this was only one of the variants of the typologization of communities; there were others that differed significantly from the above. "Titular" and "non-titular" peoples, national majorities and minorities had different opportunities for the realization of vital interests.

The territorial principle of the national-state structure of the USSR over time revealed an increasing contradiction with the growing internationalization of the population composition of "national" entities. A good example was the Russian Federation, where 51.5% of the population of the USSR lived in 1989. The total number of Russian peoples was most often indicated by an indefinite expression: "more than a hundred". The republic had a complex hierarchical system of national-state and administrative structure. It consisted of 31 national-state and national-territorial entities (16 autonomous republics, 10 autonomous regions and 10 autonomous districts); there were 31 ethnic groups (peoples whose name the

autonomous entities are named after). Under the pom, four autonomous entities had two "titular" parods (Kabardino-Balkaria, Chechen-Ingushetia, Karachay-Cherkessia, and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug). The Buryats and Nenets had only three autonomous formations, while the Ossetians had two (one in Russia, the other in Georgia). The Dagestan ASSR was inhabited by 26 indigenous peoples. Other ethnic groups did not have their own territorial national formations, along with the autonomous national entities of the Russian Federation and the "Russian" territories and regions without an official national identity. In this situation, among different peoples of the natural ethnicities, there were movements for equalization and improvement of their "state" status or its acquisition.

Differing Population Growth Rates

The peoples who lived in the USSR during the period under review differed significantly from each other in terms of their population growth rates. For example, among the peoples, each of which numbered more than 1 million people in 1989, and since 1959. it changed as follows. The number of Latvians and Estonians increased by 3% and 4%; Ukrainians and Belarusians by 18% and 26%; Russians and Lithuanians by 27% and 30%; Kyrgyz, Georgians, and Moldovans by 50% and 64%; Kazakhs, Azerbaijanis, and Kyrgyz by 125% and 15%; and Uzbeks and Tajiks by 176% and 200%. All this created a natural concern of individual peoples about the demographic situation, which was aggravated by unregulated migration of the population.

The situation was also paradoxical for a state governed by the rule of law, since for 7% of Russian citizens, 50% of the total area of Ross was officially declared "territories of their own state", and other peoples, including the Russians, who made up more than 80% of the population, had no political and legal status. The system of national-territorial autonomies did not solve the problems of the "Tula" ethnic groups. All the peoples who had their own autonomous formations in 1989 numbered 17.7 million people (12% of the population of the Russian Federation). Of these, 10.3 million lived within their own autonomous entities, which was equal to 7% of the total population of Russia. Only 6 "titular" ethnic groups made up the majority of the population in their autonomous regions. In fact, the peoples who gave names to most of the Russian autonomous regions were "titular" minorities in them. Many ethnic groups largely lived outside of their ethnoterritorial entities; 99.4% Jews, 73% Mords, 73% Tatars, 52% Mari, 51% Chuvash, 44% Ossetians, 40% Bash, 40% Karelians, etc. 30 national groups with a total of 1.3 M persons were in Russia, people the bulk of which born outside of the Soviet Union, having their statehood (German, Korens, Poles, Greeks, Finns, Bulgarians, numbering hundreds and tens of thousands people, and the French, the Austrians, British and Americans, numbering in the hundreds of people) The Soviet authorities rejected "extraterritorial autonomy" (national-personal, national-cultural), believing that it contradicted the principle of internal nationalism and preserved "refined nationalism.

Contradictions in the national sphere quite often came out of a latent state to the surface of public life. Thus, during the period under review, the movements of the

Crimean Tatars and the Germans who lost their autonomy during the Great Patriotic War for the restoration of regional territorial formations made themselves felt. Other repressed peoples demanded permission to return to their former places of residence (the Turks-Meskhetians, Greeks, etc.). Dissatisfaction with the conditions of life in the USSR gave rise to movements among a number of peoples (Jews, Germans, Greeks) movements for the right to emigrate to the "historical homeland".

Protest Movements

Excesses and other acts of discontent with the national policy arose on other occasions. A number of them can be marked according to the chronology of events. So, on April 24, 1965, in connection with the 50th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in Turkey, an unauthorized one hundred thousandth funeral procession was held in Yerevan. The students and the workers and employees of many organizations who joined them marched to the city center with the slogan "Justly solve the Armenian question!". From noon on Lenin Square, Rallies began. In the evening, a crowd surrounded the opera house, where an official "public meeting" was held in connection with the anniversary of the tragedy. Rocks flew through the windows. After that, the demonstrators were dispersed using fire trucks. P. E. Shelest in the book of memoirs "Let you not be judged" (1994) notes that on September 2, 1965, at a meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee, when discussing his note on foreign policy issues, reproaches were made that the struggle against

manifestations of bourgeois nationalism is weak in Ukraine; the propaganda of friendship of peoples and the national education system are poorly organized. Nationalism was also seen in the fact that they honor Taras Shevchenko very much and "speak too much in the Ukrainian language".

In particular, it was noted that "Sevastopol is a city of Russian glory, and it has inscriptions in the Ukrainian language." "And in general, some have gone so far," wrote Shelest, "that they have declared the Ukrainian language a distorted Russian language. In all this, the most rabid chauvinism was manifested, and this was especially true in the speeches of Shelepin, Suslov, Demichev, and Kosygin. Brezhnev was unforgivably mocking about the Ukrainian language, which means about the culture and the Ukrainian people." In the same book, it is noted that on January 3, 1966 was presented with a report on the letter of Dzyuba on 214 pages and in this regard the leader of the Ukrainian Communists noted: "We need to take urgent and decisive measures. It was clearly evident that nationalist elements were raising their heads in some places."

On October 8, 1966, Crimean Tatars held rallies in the Uzbek cities of Andijan and Bekabad. On October 18, they held a rally on the occasion of ... the anniversary of the formation of the Crimean ASSR in Ferghana, Kunasai, Tashkent, Chirchik, Samarkand, Kokand, Yangikurgan, Uchkuduk. Many rallies were dispersed. At the same time, only in Angren and Bekabad, more than 65 people were taken away, 17 of them were convicted for participating in "mass disorder". During the dispersal of rallies in these two cities, the police used fire hoses,

smoke bombs and batons.

In March 1967 in the past two weeks continued, "the Abkhazian meetings" in which the participants demanded the legalization Abkhaz place-names. The following are some of the key points of this report: throughout the Republic of granting privileges to members of the Abkhazian nationality in employment and admission to institutions of higher education, the study of the Abkhaz language in all non-Abkhaz schools, and even separation of Abkhazia from the Georgian state.

Abkhazia with the status of a union republic within the USSR.

At night, Georgian inscriptions on signs, road signs and signs were painted over. In September 1967, a group of cultural figures from Abkhazia arrived in Moscow with a demand to withdraw from circulation a book published in Tbilisi, the author of which tried to prove that "there is no Abkhazian nationality at all; Abkhazians are Georgians who once converted to Islam." As a result, the secretary of the regional committee and the chairman of the Government of Abkhazia were dismissed from their posts and Abkhazians were recommended in their place. Georgian names and signs in the Georgian language have been replaced with Abkhazian ones. Departments of the Abkhazian language and literature were opened at the University of Tbilisi, May 22, 1967

During the traditional meeting and laying flowers at the monument to Taras Shevchenko in Kiev, several people

were detained for participating in an unauthorized event. Outraged people surrounded the police and chanted: "Shame!" Later, 200 to 300 participants of the meeting went to the Central Committee building to express themselves, to protest and secure the release of those arrested. The authorities tried to stop the movement of the column with water from fire trucks. The Minister of Public Order of the republic was forced to release the detainees.

On September 2, 1967, the police dispersed a demonstration of many thousands of Crimean Tatars in Tashkent, protesting against the dispersal of the two-thousandth assembly on June 27, a meeting with representatives of the Crimean Tatar people who had returned from Moscow after receiving them on June 21 by Yu. V. Andropov, N. A. Shchelokov, Secretary of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR M. P. Georgadze, and Prosecutor General R. A. Rudenko. At the same time, 160 people were detained, 10 of them were convicted. On September 5, 1967, a decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was issued, removing the accusation of treachery from the Crimean Tatars. They were restored to their civil rights. Tatar youth received the right to study at universities in Moscow and Leningrad, but Tatar families could not come to the Crimea and settle there. "The Crimean Tatars received political rehabilitation without the right to return to Crimea. The partisans of Crimea objected to their return, but the main reason was that the Crimea had by that time been "donated" by N. S. Khrushchev to Ukraine.

The latter circumstance most complicated the situation of the Crimean Tatars. If it were not for this gesture, they

would have lived quietly in the Crimea for a long time," wrote in this regard, F. D. Bobkov in his book "KGB and Power" (1995). According to him, nothing contradicted the right of the Crimean Tatars to return to their historical homeland. "This desire is growing stronger and stronger. It was fueled by a discriminatory decision that was made against the Crimean Tatars, but did not affect other migrants who received the right to restore autonomy." This also explains the fact that "some mass media claimed that such a nationality did not exist at all. They wrote to close the publication of literature in the Crimean Tatar language and the newspaper in this language, published in Uzbekistan, there is, they say, no such language. And all this was done by serious people who were obliged to solve such an important state issue."

F. D. Bobkov writes further that he had to deal with the problem of the Crimean Tatars in 1967, almost from the first day of work in the 5th Directorate of the KGB. Several hundred Crimean Tatars arrived in Moscow at that time, demanding that the country's leadership and the party be allowed to return to their native places. The department proposed a plan for the gradual return of the Tatars through an organized recruitment of labor. K. V. Andropov, who was instructed to meet with representatives of the movement, approved this decision. However, the second participant of the meeting, the Minister of Internal Affairs of the USSR, N. A. Shchelokov, led a different line: nothing concrete to promise the envoys of the Crimean Tatars. Under great pressure, Ukraine still agreed to accept two hundred-fifty Tatar families a year. But soon there were calls from the Krasnodar region that began: across the Kerch Strait on the ferry Tatars are again forcibly taken out of the

Crimea. This was done by the decision of the leadership of Ukraine. The events were further developed after "the leaders of the extremist wing" turned to the staff of the American embassy for help. And they immediately used this occasion, and launched a noisy campaign in the foreign press.

It took a long time to overcome the consequences of the clash between Uzbek and Russian youth that occurred in Tashkent during and after the football match between the teams "Pah-shkor "(Tashkent) and" Krylia Sovetov " (Kuibyshev) on September 27 1969 at the stadium that seats more than 100 thousand people. The local population's dislike of Russians was caused by negative traits (drunkenness, hooliganism, theft, prostitution), allegedly brought in the 1950s mainly from the Volga region, especially from Samara. The emphatic nickname "samarskiye" has since taken root among Uzbeks and has been transferred to all Russians. The conflict arose in the middle of the match, 1. when the referee did not count the goal scored by Pakhtakor against the Kuibyshev team. In 20 places of the stadium, pre-sawed posters were raised with the words: "Samara, go home!" and attempts to snatch the posters from the hands of the Uzbeks led to fights.

The police could not cope with the riots. The match stopped and the crowds of spectators rushed to the exits. And the Uzbek youth tuned in along the exits from the stadium and let the crowd "through their line", beating up persons with Slavic appearance. Clashes continued in the streets of the city. For several days after the incident, the Russians were afraid to ride in public transport: the raging youth threw them out of buses and

trolleycars. As a result, more than a thousand people were arrested. Instead of making these public, the leaders of the republic tried to minimize information about the scale of the incident and take measures to prevent such excesses in the future. Realizing the unsightly nature of the incident, especially against the background of assistance to Tashkent from the RSFSR and other allied republics after the devastating earthquake of 1966, Rashidov did not want the incident to be regarded as Uzbek nationalism, and did everything to hide it from Moscow.

The period of the 60-80s is characterized by a significant increase in Zionist sentiments among Soviet Jews, inspired by foreign Zionist centers. The result of the "awakening of the Jewish consciousness among young people" was the growth of emigration motives. According to the population census in January 1970, there were 2,151,000 Jews in the USSR. But this did not include the so-called "hidden", the total number of which, according to some estimates, reached up to 10 million. Zionism and its accompanying anti-Semitism as a protest against this ideology became a serious problem in many cities of the USSR. In order to refute the accusations that the USSR is allegedly pursuing a policy of state anti-Semitism, an official pamphlet "Soviet Jews; Myths and Reality" (1972) was published. The facts presented in it showed the far-fetched nature of such judgments. In particular, it was pointed out that, according to the census of 1970, in the USSR, Jews made up less than 1% of the total population of the country. At the same time, out of 844 Lenin Prize winners, 96 (11.4%) were Jews, 564 (66.8%) were Russians, and 184 (21.8%) were from other nationalities. The highest title of Hero of

Socialist Labor was awarded to 55 people, twice this title was awarded to 4, three times — 3 representatives of this nationality. In 1941-1942, about 2 million Jews were sent to the deep rear from the front line (the western regions of the country, where Jews lived in a relatively compact population). According to the Evacuation Board at the beginning of December 1941, they accounted for 26.9% of all evacuees. Under the policy of state anti-Semitism, this would be impossible.

In 1972, when Georgia was replaced as the first Secretary of the Central Committee. The Communist Party of the Republic, opened the opportunity to review the attitude of its leadership to the national problem of the Meskhetian Turks. V. P. Mzhavanadze, when he was the first Secretary of the Central Committee (1953-1972), considered it impossible to return them. "First," he said, "the Meskhetian lands are already occupied by others, and secondly, the border is near, but the Meskhetians are engaged in smuggling, and therefore the border guards object to their return." Attempts of one and the other leaders of the KGB, F. D. Bobkov's attempts to convince him that this was incorrect information and that the commander of the border troops, General V. A. Matrosov, held the same opinion had no effect. It was also not taken into account that several hundred Meskhetinians who moved to neighboring Azerbaijan live in peace in the Russian Federation. E. A. Shevardnadze, when he became the first secretary of the Central Committee, "also supported the false version that the border guards objected to the resettlement of Meskhetians to Georgia." As a result, only a few of those Meskhetians who decided to change their nationality and became Georgian on their passport were able to return

there.

In the same 1972, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU drew attention to the book of one of its members, P. E. Shelest — "UkraTna nasha radyans-ka" ("Ukraine is our Soviet"), published in 1971. On March 30, during a meeting of the Politburo, Brezhnev made several remarks in the sense that "this book praises the Cossacks, promotes archaism", and M. S. Solomentsev continued: "In Ukraine, there are many signs and announcements in the Ukrainian language. And how does it differ from Russian? Only a distortion of the latter. So why do it? " — "Agreed"! Shelest was indignant in his diary entries. "He showed Great Russian chauvinism, and everything goes away. Solomentsev opposed the establishment of coats of arms of cities, excursions and tourism to ancient cities and memorable places. And A. N. Kosygin sounded: "The creation of the Sovnarkhoz in its time was also a manifestation of nationalism. It is not clear why in Ukraine schools should learn the Ukrainian language?

Sevastopol has been a Russian city for centuries. And: why are there signs and shop windows in Ukrainian? The leader of the Ukrainian Communists has been criticized for his nationalism. In the magazine "Communist of Ukraine" (1973, No. 4), an editorial article "On the serious shortcomings of one book" was published. It was instructed to discuss the article and the book of Shelest on all city and regional assets. The book was withdrawn from sale. Shelest tried to convince Brezhnev. He claimed: "In terms of national politics, I have always been and remain an internationalist, but I will never give up my people, my belonging to the nation,

its culture, and history: after all, I am not Thomas the rootless." "I still maintain," he said of his book, "that it sets out all the issues correctly, from class, ideological, international, and historical perspectives... Why did it have to be withdrawn and criticized?" There was no explanation. On April 27, 1973, by the decision of the plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the author of the book "went on vacation for health reasons". As for his work, Shelest remained convinced: "When I was in Kiev, there was a 'Ukrainization'."

In 1972, the funeral of Romas Kalanta, an 18-year-old boy from Kaunas, who committed self-immolation on May 18 in protest against the "Soviet occupation of Lithuania", caused a great outcry. They turned into a large-scale demonstration of national protest. After attempts by Illeisti to prevent those gathered from taking part in the funeral, young Lithuanians headed to the city center, chanting "Freedom!", "Lithuania!". There were clashes with the police. The next day, the manifesto resumed. Military units entered the city. The assembled crowd dispersed after an appeal from the authorities and Kalanta's parents. But about 400 demonstrators were detained, and 8 of them were convicted for participating in "street riots."

In 1973, the situation around the Prigorodny district of North Ossetia worsened. On January 16-19, thousands of Ingush people gathered in Grozny, demanding that the authorities solve this problem. The statement submitted to the authorities listed the facts of discrimination of the Ingush population in Ossetia, mainly in the employment process. The Ingush people asked for equal rights with the Ossetians in the territory

of the disputed region. Demonstrations and rallies continued for several days. People carried portraits of Lenin and Brezhnev, slogans with statements of the leaders about internationalism and friendship of peoples. The demonstrators organized their own "service of order" and did not allow "anti-Soviet statements". After the arrival of M. S. Solomentsev, it was decided to consider the issue and not to repress the participants of the speech. However, several hundred young Ingush people who refused to go home on the buses provided to the protesters were dispersed with water from water hoses and police batons.

In 1976, it was possible to solve the problem of Soviet Germans who were evicted from their places of residence during the war. Since then, the story of their misadventures has been overgrown with many attempts to restore justice. Here is how F. D. Bobkov writes about this: "With the beginning During the Great Patriotic War, all Germans were relocated to the East — both Siberia and Kazakhstan. It was difficult to explain why their rights were not restored after the war. In Germany, there were centers that supported the emigration sentiments of Soviet Germans. We sang ostrich politics, pretending that the problem didn't exist at all.

It got to the point of absurdity. For example, in Kazakhstan, about a million Germans were expelled from the inhabited land in the Volga region, and this fact was attempted to be hidden from the Soviet and world public. In the encyclopedia of Kazakhstan, the Germans were not even mentioned as a nationality in the population of the republic. There it was also written that in Akmolinsk the newspaper "Freundschaft"

("Friendship") is published in German and a German theater works. Strange! ... But now the German Chancellor Adenauer was going to visit Moscow. The Central Committee of the CPSU began to fuss, realizing that the Soviet Germans would certainly appeal to him. And then a truly Solomonic decision was made: out of many thousands of people who wanted to go to Germany, they received permission to leave... about three hundred families. The same thing was done later, when other high-ranking officials from both German states visited the USSR." Headed by F. D. Bobkov, the 5th Directorate of the KGB entered the Central Committee of the CPSU with a proposal to recreate German autonomy and allow the Germans to leave for their homeland. "The question of autonomy hung in the air, but the entry was still allowed. The Germans began to leave. What started here! "How so? People are leaving the country of socialism! They leave the areas where there are closed businesses! (And where do we not have them?)". The KGB Department offered another solution: "To create a German neutral region on the territory of Kazakhstan". Because otherwise there was a threat to depopulating the virgin land, which gave good harvests. The decision of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU was made in 1976.

And then there were new obstacles. In Kazakhstan, students of the Tselinograd Pedagogical Institute were inspired to protest, they were supported by the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Government of Kazakhstan, although they themselves took part in the preparation of the creation of the autonomy and determined its administrative boundaries. The matter was getting more complicated, and no one wanted to

look for a way out. And it was: to restore autonomy in the Volga region. The leaders of the Saratov region were willing to meet them, because a lot of land was empty. Several thousand Germans have already returned to those places. But the Central Committee of the CPSU did not go for this option. To solve the case in this way means to quarrel with the first secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, D. A. Kunaev: after all, if the Germans leave the virgin land, the region will lose its workers. So they fudged the question. On this ground, I had a skirmish with Kunaev. He threw the phrase: "The Germans themselves do not want autonomy, and you impose it on them!" Then I drew attention to the fact that even in Tselinograd, students were not against German autonomy in general, but against its creation in Kazakhstan."

In January 1977, it came to national terror. Three Armenians, a metalworker S. S. Stepanyan, an electric welder A.V. Baghdasaryan and a painter B. M. Zatikyan, who were members of the underground "National United Party", came from Yerevan to Moscow with the aim of fighting illegally against the Russian people. On Saturday, January 8, during the school holidays, they detonated three bombs-in a subway car and two grocery stores on October 25. 37 people were killed and injured. After a failed attempt to detonate three charges at the Kursk railway station on the eve of the November holidays of 1977, the perpetrators were arrested.

It is characteristic that in this case, in order not to "compromise the Armenian people in the eyes of the Russians", on the instructions of the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of

Armenia, K. S. Demirchyan, no newspaper published in Armenian published reports about the terrorist act. A documentary about the trial of Zatikyan and his accomplices, filmed during the Supreme Court session, was banned from being shown. When did the speech of academician A.D. Demirchyan appear in Izvestia? Who protested against the alleged illegal arrest of the Armenians (he refused to believe that three terrorists could have come to Moscow to commit murder), was violently indignant: "How dare Sakharov divulge the names of the criminals, who gave permission to the editorial office to print this material! "

Football fans in Vilnius were among the first to respond to the new Constitution of the USSR. On October 7, 1977, after the victory of "Zhalyiris" over the Vitebsk "Dvina", several hundred spectators of a football match moved through the streets of the city, shouting: "Down with the constitution of the occupiers!", "Freedom to Lithuania!", "Russians, get out!". Lithuanian youth tore down posters for the 60th anniversary of October, smashed windows with visual propaganda. The incident ended with the detention of 17 participants of this peculiar demonstration. Three days later, similar events occurred after a football match between Zalgiris and Iskra Smolensk. Now more than 10 thousand spectators went to the center of Vilnius, shouting slogans against the Soviet occupation. The demonstrators broke through the barrier of the police, internal troops and went to Lenin Avenue. A second, more powerful barrier stopped their movement. As a result of the riots, windows were broken in the building of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania, showcases with political posters were smashed, several policemen were

hospitalized, 44 people were detained, and students were expelled from universities.

After the adoption of the Constitution, the situation in interethnic relations has not changed for the better in other regions of the country. Its originality and sharpness are shown in the mentioned book by O. A. Platonov.

"The outflow of the resources of the Russian people to the national regions of the USSR," he writes, "greatly weakened the main nation, sharply worsened its financial situation. Instead of building factories and roads and telephone exchanges, schools, museums, and theaters in Central Russia, the values created by the hands of Russians provided conditions for the preferential development of other peoples (and above all their ruling strata).

As a result, a significant number of people living on unearned incomes arise in the national republics, due to speculation and fraud with the resources of the Russian people. It is in this environment that mafia clans are gradually formed and intertwined with each other," patronizing "various kinds of shadowy" and "tsekhoviks", and nationalist organizations (always associated with Western special services). It is quite characteristic that the more a particular national republic unnecessarily consumed at the expense of the resources of the Russian people, the stronger were its mafia and nationalist organizations (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Estonia). In Georgia, mafia and nationalist organizations, which are closely intertwined, have become an influential force in society, and their leaders have become role models for young people, especially students. The situation in Armenia is not the best either.

Here, the mafia-nationalist clans paid special attention to the "education" of young people. Armenian children and teenagers were inspired from an early age with the idea of the exclusivity of the Armenian nation. Many Armenians became convinced nationalists by adulthood, and with an anti-Russian orientation, which they received not without the help of the widely branched underground nationalist organization Dashnaks, the leadership centers of the organization were located in the United States and were funded by the CIA."

Contradictions in the national sphere were manifested when new republican constitutions were adopted in 1978 on the basis of the USSR Constitution. To reflect the process of "rapprochement" of nations, the draft constitutions of the Transcaucasian Union republics, at the suggestion of the Center, excluded articles on the state language that were in the previous ones. This "innovation" caused a wave of open protest from students and intellectuals in Georgia. The articles had to be preserved in the constitutions of Azerbaijan and Armenia, despite the fact that they did not exist in the Union Republic, as well as in the constitutions of the other union republics.

Unrest over the state language began in Georgia. The draft of the new Constitution of the Republic did not contain a record of the Georgian language as the State language. And as soon as the session of the Supreme Soviet of Georgia adopted the corresponding article in a new version on March 14, 1978, a demonstration and a rally were immediately organized in Tbilisi to demand the preservation of the record of the state document of the Georgian language. In front of the Government House,

surrounded by searches, more than 10 thousand people, mostly students, gathered. E. A. Shevardnadze came out to the protesters and promised to satisfy their demand. Under the pressure of the rally, the extraordinary session of the Supreme Council of the Republic decided to leave the article on the language unchanged. In the text of the published Constitution, the words about Russian were deleted, and Georgian was declared the only state language.

The refusal of the Georgians to recognize the state language and Russian as equal caused an immediate nationalist reaction in Armenia. Despite the fact that this article of the Constitution was already adopted, the Armenians, following the example of Georgia, gave a "reverse course" and recognized only the Armenian language as the state language.

In the spring of 1978, meetings of the Abkhazian population were held in various localities of the autonomous Republic, demanding that the Abkhazian language be given a state status, that Georgians stop migrating to the republic, that they separate from Georgia and become part of the RSFSR. The concession to the Abkhazian demands was the inclusion in the Constitution of the autonomous Republic of a provision on the introduction of three state languages: Abkhazian, Russian and Georgian.

In December 1978, a demonstration of German "refuseniks" took place in Dushanbe, demanding that they be allowed to leave the country. Demonstrators marched from the hotel "Tajikistan" to the building of the Supreme Council with a banner "Let us go home". The

first secretary of the city committee addressed the audience and promised to increase the number of exit permits. The promise was fulfilled.

In the spring of 1979, the autonomist sentiments of the Germans in Kazakhstan reached their peak. The leaders of the republic promised to resolve the issue. The territory of the future autonomy was determined, its capital was named (Ermentau in the east of the Tselinograd region), the regional committee building was chosen, and its composition was planned. It remained only to proclaim the formation of the autonomous region, scheduled for June 15. However, in the morning of this day, a demonstration of Kazakh students took place in Tselinograd against the decisions of the authorities in Moscow and Alma-Ata on the creation of autonomy. It was held under the slogans: "Kazakhstan is indivisible!", " There is no German autonomy!".

I had to ask the activists of the autonomist movement to "wait" for the proclamation of their national-territorial formation. The first secretary of the regional committee reassured the Kazakh participants of the demonstration with the message that no one was going to establish autonomy, the question of it had never even been raised. The students' speeches were tacitly supported by the Republican leadership. And only many years later, in July 1987, when discussing in the Central Committee of the CPSU the question "About the work of the Kazakh Republican Party Organization for the international and patriotic education of workers", it was said: "Serious mistakes and miscalculations in the work of the party committees of the republic led to an increase in nationalist manifestations, which were not stopped in a

timely manner, moreover, were hushed up as ordinary hooliganism. Even those that took place in 1979 in Tselinograd, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan did not give a sharp political assessment to the nationalist speeches. About the riots in December last year in Alma-Ata were also a reflection of Kazakh nationalism" (Pravda. 1987. July 16).

The autumn of 1980 was a time of youth unrest in Estonia. On September 22, after the cancellation of the performance of the youth pop orchestra "Propeller", scheduled at the Tallinn stadium after a football match, about a thousand Estonian schoolchildren took to the streets to protest against this decision. The concert was canceled due to the discovery of "nationalist motives" in the lyrics. The demonstration was dispersed by the police, and several high school students were expelled from schools. And on October 1 and 3, the police had to disperse more than a thousand protest demonstrations against these expelled. The demonstrators waved flags of independent Estonia, shouted slogans "Freedom of Estonia!", "Russians-get out of Estonia!". On October 7 and 8, new demonstrations in Tallinn (several hundred participants) followed, and on October 10, youth demonstrations in Tartu and Pärnu. Among others, the demand for the resignation of the Russian Minister of Education of Estonia was put forward. On October 11, the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic warned against continuing the speeches. Parents' meetings were held in schools, and parents of "rioters" were threatened with dismissal from their jobs. As a result of all these events, about 100 students were excluded from schools, and several people were convicted of "hooliganism".

The year 1981 is characterized by the strengthening of the offensive of the authorities against the Russian patriotic forces. On March 28, Yu. V. Andropov sends a note to the Politburo, in which he notes the creation of a movement of "Rusists" among the intelligentsia. Russian culture in the note was presented as demagoguery about the need to fight for the preservation of Russian culture, ancient monuments, for the "salvation of the Russian nation", which "covers their subversive activities of the outspoken enemies of the Soviet system". Under the slogans of protecting the Russian national traditions, the Rusists, the head of the KGB reported, "are essentially engaged in active anti-Soviet activities." Andropov raised the question of the speedy elimination of the ' * Gogo movement, which, in his opinion, threatened the communist foundations more than the so-called dissidents. As concrete measures, it was proposed to "bring to criminal responsibility to A.M. Ivanov."

As for Semanov, it seems necessary to consider the decision to dismiss him from the post of editor-in-chief of the journal "Man and the Law". The decision on his criminal liability will be made depending on the course of the investigation in the case of Ivanov. At the same time, it is planned to carry out preventive measures in the presence of their like-minded people who are not inclined to disarm, and those who are deluded."

The result of the attack on the "Rusists" was the dismissal of S. N. Semanov in April from the post of editor-in-chief of the magazine "Man and the Law". Together with him, an employee of the magazine

Ryzhikov suffered, who compiled a number of documents in which he put forward a demand for a purge of the party apparatus, "littered with Zionists and their sympathizers." In August, the publicist A. M. Ivanov, the author of well-known articles in the patriotic circles in the magazine "Veche", the works "The Logic of Nightmare" and "The Knight of an Obscure Image", depicting the history of the Communist Party as a chain of conspiracies, coups, and brutal violence, conceived and implemented by people who dreamed only of preserving their personal power, was arrested. At the end of 1981, the editorial office of *Nashe Sovremennik* was destroyed, and several "combat" materials were published in No. 11, which immediately caused a scandal. There were four accused authors: V. Kozhinov, A. Lanshikov, S. Semanov, and V. Krupin. They were "dealt with" quite quickly. The authors were publicly condemned, the editor of the magazine, S. V. Vikulov, was left in office after a corresponding suggestion, but both of his deputies were dismissed. One of them was the outstanding Russian publicist Yu. Seleznev, who died shortly afterwards. At the meetings of the Central Committee, such remarkable books by Russian writers as "Lad" were criticized Belova and "Memory" by V. Chivilikhin.

In 1982, the pro-Russian Saratov magazine "Volga" was destroyed. The reason was M. Lobanov's article "Liberation". It was written about the novel by M. Alekseev "Brawlers", which told the truth about the famine of 1933 in the Volga region. Lobanov's article was the first in Russian journalism to comprehend the scale and causes of the national tragedy of the raskrestyanivanie. As a contemporary wrote, "the effect

of the article was stunning — as if a huge stone block suddenly fell flat from somewhere in the sky into a well-warmed swamp." The publication was condemned by a special decision of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Editor-in-Chief N. E. Palkin was fired. The magazine is dead. In the autumn of 1983, the Literary Gazette and Voprosy Literatury began attacking scientists who study the works of Russian philosophers V. S. Solovyov, N. F. Fedorov, and P. A. Florensky. The publishers of the book by the outstanding Russian philosopher A. F. Losev received strict penalties.

It is characteristic that during the persecution of the "Rusists", the authorities pardoned (April 1983) the dissident "Euro Communists" (A. Fadin, P. Kudyukin, Yu. Khavkii, etc.) from the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, which was headed by the liberal academician N. N. Inozemtsev, and it 1983-1985 A. N. Yakovlev, who were arrested a year earlier.

In the autumn of 1981, there were major riots in the capital of North Ossetia. The unrest began on October 24, during the funeral in Ordzhonikidze of an Ossetian taxi driver who was killed by two Ingush men who were released three days after the murder for a ransom of 1 million rubles. The participants of the funeral procession organized a rally and seized the building of the regional committee. By the evening, order in the square was restored by the cadets of the local military school. The next day, more than 10 thousand people again filled the square in front of the regional Committee. Rally with the participation of the leaders who arrived from Moscow quickly got out of control. In the building of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the windows were broken. Military units

with armored personnel carriers and tear gas were thrown against the protesters. Clashes and hand-to-hand fighting continued until the evening, and then they spread throughout the city; several people were killed. Despite the arrival of special forces units, the clashes continued throughout the next day and only in the evening the resistance was broken. During the three days of unrest, more than 800 people were detained, 40 of them were convicted. First Secretary of the Regional Committee B. E. Kabaloev was removed from this post.

By the end of the period under review, after several fairly quiet years, there was a major ethnic unrest in the capital of Tajikistan, Dushanbe. In the spring of 1985, the long-forgotten riots in the military echelons with conscripts in the Soviet Army are again recorded. For two days, the Muslim conscripts, who were hot with alcohol, were trying to sort out their relations with non-Muslims. This event opened a series of excesses with a nationalist background in the coming "era of perestroika". The events in the North Caucasus were given special consideration at a meeting of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPSU. The reason for the problems in the national sphere was seen, as before, in the shortcomings of moral and international education, the corrupting influence of religion. The Central Committee also habitually called for building education in such a way that the Soviet person feels first of all a citizen of the USSR, and only then a representative of a particular nation.

The textbook "Social Science", written by G. H. Shakhnazarov and others, according to which many generations of high school graduates and conscripts of

the Soviet Army formed their worldview (published in 1983 in the 21st ed.), ended on a super-optimistic note: "Now we do not predict the golden times of human history, but speak about it with all the confidence that Marxist-Leninist science and social practice reveal. Even now, in the USSR, the borders between the republics have lost their former significance, and when we travel from end to end of our vast Homeland, who comes to mind to note how much grace has been crossed? Gradually, national differences will be erased, and only the names will remain a reminder of the past. United in one fraternal family, humanity will reach the heights of its power, will carry out bold plans for the conquest of nature."

However, after a few years, the past did not remind us of itself in the way that everyone expected, and completely unpredictable "perestroika" thoughts came to the heads of the leaders of the USSR, which led the unlicensed country to an unexpected collapse.

Chapter IX

"PERESTROIKA". 1985-1991

§ 1. The course to accelerate the socio-economic development of Soviet society. 1985-1986

The beginning of change. The beginning of large-scale reforms in the USSR is usually associated with 1985, when the party, and in fact the state, was headed by

Mikhail Gorbachev. Meanwhile, some researchers call Yu. V. Andropov the "father of perestroika", while others single out the "embryonic period of perestroika" (1983-1985), not without reason believing that in the first half of the 80s the USSR gradually entered the stage of reform.

By the beginning of the decade, changes in the country made possible and in many respects inevitable a profound transformation of the existing socio-economic and political relations. This is due, on the one hand, to the difficult situation in the economy, on the other — to changes in the Soviet political elite. In the early 80's, A. N. Kosygin, M. A. Suslov, L. I. Brezhnev, A. Ya. Pelshe, Yu. V. Andropov, D. F. Ustinov, K. U. Chernenko passed away. It was the last cohort of leaders who received political leaven in the Stalinist era and took protective positions in relation to the model of socialism and views on the nature of world development formed in the 30s-50s. They were replaced by completely different leaders.

Mikhail Gorbachev belonged to the generation that was formed on the wave of de-Stalinization after the XX and especially the XXII party congress. In fact, this was the first "unafraid" generation of future politicians: they did not survive in the atmosphere of repression, were much freer internally and more educated. In the Khrushchev era and in Soviet society, especially among the intelligentsia, discord began to take root. The great openness of the post-Stalin USSR and the opportunity to get acquainted with the life of the countries that achieved the most significant success in their development also played a role. All this made Gorbachev's peers more prepared to depart from those canonical provisions of socialist theory that hindered the development of Soviet

society at the end of the twentieth century.

The transitional nature of intra-Elite relations and related policies emerged soon after the death of Leonid Brezhnev. Yu. V. Andropov, who succeeded him, was aware of the need for serious changes. In the USSR, however, it was supposed to implement them gradually, initially limited to the economic sphere. Such careful transformations were carried out during his reign. At the same time, Andropov began to select a "team" of those who were ready to vigorously undertake the improvement of socialism. There is evidence that he encouraged Gorbachev's proactive behavior, seeing him as a possible successor. During the reign of K. U. Chernenko, he had already established himself as the second person in the party, which he naturally headed in March 1985.

However, the presence of political will alone was not enough to bring the country out of the crisis. Much depended on the ideas of how to do this, and here any potential Soviet reformer inevitably faced great difficulties. On the one hand, the new leader and his supporters attracted such wellknown scientists as L. G. Aganbegyan, G. A. Arbatov, O. T. Bogomolov, T. I. Zaslavskaya, as consultants and advisers. I. Abalkin, R. A. Belousov, N. Ya. Petrakov, S. A. Sitaryan, who, according to N. I. Ryzhkov, had "non-standard developments and seditious thoughts", were now in demand. On the other hand, until the mid — 1990s, due to ideological reasons, the efforts of economists focused on the development of Marxist doctrine were delayed. The principal achievements of the subsequent period were connected with its refutation. And since the Soviet

economic system lacked the mechanisms that are the main subject of modern economic science: competitive markets, a complex banking system, currency exchanges, financial instruments, etc. - economists developed mainly the theory of planning.

By the beginning of the "Perestroika" in the country, with rare exceptions, there were no theoretical specialists in macroeconomics, capital and labor markets, international finance, and the theory of production organizations. This gives grounds to assert that the reforms of the second half of the 80s "were not prepared in terms of ideological-theoretical and organizational-applied" and "the concept of perestroika and practice in many respects is pure improvisation" (G. X. Popov).

April (1985) Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU. After the death of K. U. Chernenko in March 1985, at the plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the new General Secretary of the fervor was elected M.S. Gorbachev. The election of a young, energetic leader reflected the desire of both society as a whole and the political elite for long-overdue changes. Gorbachev and his associates did not have a well-developed plan for reform. But they were united by the desire to clear up the accumulated "blockages", overcome stagnation, give more dynamism to the social system built in the USSR, and accelerate the socio-economic development of the country. •It was supposed to be carried out by regrouping and concentrating forces and means in its main directions.

In political terms, the tasks of the new stage were formulated in Gorbachev's speech at the April (1985)

plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU. The Secretary-General spoke about the need to increase the pace of socio-economic development. At the same time, the tasks of transferring production to the rails of intensification, acceleration of scientific and technological progress were put to the fore. To implement large-scale tasks, it was proposed to "resolutely raise the responsibility of personnel, organization, and discipline." In acceleration, the central place was given to mechanical engineering. The pace of its development was to increase by one and a half to two times, and quickly switch to the production of new generations of machinery and equipment. Primary attention was supposed to be paid to the improvement of machine tool construction, acceleration of the development of computer technology, instrument engineering, electrical engineering and electronics as catalysts for scientific and technological progress. The intention was expressed to resolutely eliminate departmental barriers in the agro-industrial complex.

Among the priorities was the preparation of a comprehensive program for the development of the production of consumer goods and services. The plenary session discussed the urgency to meet the needs of the population in garden plots, change the situation in health care, promote school reform, and improve the financial situation of a number of mass social groups. Gorbachev raised the question of "perestroika" of the style and "transparency" of work in party and state institutions. The statements of the new leader about the unacceptability of stagnation in the cedar movement, the urgent need to nominate young, initiative workers, and the role of the "human factor" were received with great

approval.

Changes in social and political life.

The first positive changes were most pronounced in the socio-political atmosphere. It was largely determined by the personal qualities of the new leader. *"A smart, smiling face with regular features, unusually expressive eyes... a well-built, slightly plump, but toned figure; a confident manner; openness and wild desirability combined with a stern and domineering look. In short, he is all made up of charm, and this was enough to win the sympathy of his contemporaries from the first appearances on the screen and on the street."*

The "Gorbachev effect" was also enhanced by the new Secretary-General's involuntary comparisons with his predecessors. In addition, with several well-thought-out actions of the Mountains," Bachev immediately declared his special closeness to the people. This was facilitated by his trips to Leningrad, Kiev; to Moscow factories and collective farms near Moscow; to the Urals, the North, the Far East; to some republics, where he often "without a piece of paper" communicated with "workers". A favorable impression was made by Gorbachev's suppression of attempts to revive the humiliating tradition of praising the leaders.

His "personnel revolution" was gradually gaining momentum. A positive impression was made by getting rid of the elderly cohort of party and state leaders who had been promoted under Brezhnev. In 1985-1986, G. A. Aliyev, V. V. Grishin, D. A. Kunaev, G. V. Romanov,

and N. A. Tikhonov lost important posts. But among the first in the central party apparatus, they were received by N. I. Ryzhkov, E. K. Ligachev, and E. V. A. Shevardnadze, L. N. Zaikov, B. N. Yeltsin. By the beginning of 1987, 70% of the members of the Politburo, 60 — secretaries of regional party organizations, 40 — members of the Central Committee of the CPSU, who began under Brezhnev, were appointed. The changes went from top to bottom. From 1986 to 1988, 70% of the heads were replaced at the level of city and district committees. Economic managers were replaced at an even higher rate. Of the 115 members of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, appointed before 1985, in the first year of Gorbachev's stay in power, one third was replaced. In 1988 there were 22, and in the RZHU — 10. The rotation continued later.

The actions of the new first Secretary of the Moscow CC of the CPSU, B. N. Yeltsin, who conducted a real purge of the capital from Grishin cadres in the city committee and district committees of the party, received a wide public response. He initially stood out from Gorbachev's nominees by his determination. For example, in December 1985, he gave an acrimonious (abrasive) speech in Tashkent about the situation in Uzbekistan, which was one of the first testing grounds for exposing corruption during the Brezhnev era.

The older, less dynamic managers, who often spent a long time "sitting" in their seats, were usually replaced by young, energetic people who wanted to "turn around". This reflected a long-standing public need to move away from "gerontocratic rule". Over time, however, the pace and scale of change began to raise concerns. They

became known as the "personnel purge", comparable to Stalin's "personnel revolution". With a very rapid change of personnel, continuity in work is disrupted, and the management system is destabilized.

The positive impact on the atmosphere of the first years of Gorbachev's rule was the expansion of public awareness. This Process unfolded gradually, went on incrementally, without anyone protesting. People began to learn more about the hidden pages of the past, economic and social problems. Certain results of the first "poieleprelsky" year are summed up in the materials of the XXVII Congress of the CPSU (end of February 1986). In the new version of the CPSU Program adopted by him and the Directives for the twelfth Fifth Amendment, the course for accelerating the socio-economic development of Soviet society is clearly outlined.

Anti-Alcohol

New features in economic policy. In 1985-1986, the economic problems that had matured in the country were attempted to be solved mainly by administrative methods, the question of creating economic mechanisms for the implementation of the tasks set declared in a most general form. The anti-alcohol campaign, the first major comprehensive event of the new leaders, which was consistently implemented in 1985-1988, is extremely indicative of the initial stage of the reforms. It made a lot of political sense. It was not only a chronic, but also a constantly progressing social disease.

"Drunk" money (the tax) has long been actively used by the budget, and the earlier attempts to "fight against drunkenness and alcoholism" were actually hypocritical: the state was catastrophically short of funds, and it did not dare to abandon reliable sources of financial income. The emphasis on "drunk money", the parasitism on the shadowy features of human nature, was the result of the inability to achieve budget success in a more "qualified" way.

The fight against drunkenness and alcoholism, which began in May 1985, testified to the seriousness of the new leadership's intentions to tackle the most difficult problem. On the whole, it was well received, although many questioned the possibility of its successful completion. The campaign was conducted mainly by administrative methods, which was in the tradition of those years when the parameters of the ongoing transformations were regulated "from above". At the same time, some members of the new leadership initially warned about its senselessness, pointing primarily to the risk of not receiving money in the budget. However, the position of supporters of a broader view of the problem, who in addition to political arguments also brought economic arguments, won. According to their calculations, the reduction of losses from drunkenness in production (they were estimated at 80-100 million rubles annually), together with the gradual curtailment of the production of alcohol, should, if not nullify, then at least minimize the inevitable budget losses at first.

The measures carried out had a certain positive effect: injuries were reduced; the death rate of people, loss of

working time, hooliganism, divorce for reasons of drunkenness and alcoholism decreased. But, as Gorbachev later wrote, "the negative consequences of the anti-alcohol campaign far outweighed its advantages." The costs of the campaign include: the hasty closure of stores, wine and vodka factories; deforestation of vineyards; curtailment of dry wine production; reduction of beer production; mass development of moonshine brewing, which led to the exhaustion of sugar resources in the country. This led to a sharp reduction in the range of confectionery products; inexpensive colognes used instead of vodka began to disappear, and the use of other "substitutes" for it led to an increase in diseases, anger of significant masses of the population. Served by Gorbachev, as a result of massive anti-alcohol), the campaign budget received 37 billion rubles less. Contemporaries offering other figures were also given: 67 billion (N. I. Ryzhkov) and 200 billion (V. S. Pavlov). Already in 1989, revenues from the alcohol trade went up again and reached 54 billion rubles, 1 billion more than in 1984. The negative political effect of the anti-alcohol campaign was greatly enhanced by the fact that it was one of the most "visible" and clear sources of financial imbalance, the origin of which was much deeper.

Disturbing information about the "excesses" reached the management through various channels, but the "top " did not consider it necessary to adjust the course. "Our desire to overcome this terrible calamity was very great," Gorbachev later wrote. The desire to "overcome the troubles faster" determined the nature of many decisions taken in the spheres of economic and social policy in 1985-1986.

Building Science and other improvements

The course of accelerated implementation of the achievements of scientific and technological progress is reflected in the creation of a number of structures. The USSR Council of Ministers ' Bureau for Mechanical Engineering was created, the State Committee for Computer Technology and Informatics was formed (March 21, 1986), a decision was made to create inter-sectoral scientific and technical complexes (January 22, 1986), and the Main Directorate for the Creation and Use of Space Technology for the National Economy and Scientific Research was organized (October 12, 1985). The administrative resource of the department was actively used in other areas as well. The desire to eliminate bureaucracy and departmental structure dictated the creation of November 22, 1985 Gosagroprom a structure that absorbed five ministries and one state committee responsible for the production, storage and processing of agricultural products. The clumsiness and inefficiency of the new management giant gradually became apparent (it was liquidated in 1989). However, in 1985, the idea of a single management of the entire sphere of agro-industrial production was new and looked promising.

Decisions on the certification of workplaces (12 Sep, 1985) and on the transfer of enterprises with high-performance modern equipment to three-shift work focused on improving the efficiency of the use of new equipment. The improvement in the quality of products was supposed to be achieved through the experience of

state acceptance of products that justified its worth in the defense industry. By the May decision of 1986, it was introduced from January 1987. The adoption of the resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On measures to strengthen the fight against unearned income" of May 15, 1986 was also associated with the idea of restoring order.

The desire to use economic incentives more actively is especially characteristic of the middle and second half of 1986. On August 14, the USSR Council of Ministers issued a resolution authorizing the organization of cooperatives for the collection and recycling of secondary raw materials at local municipalities. According to the order, adopted on August 19, 20 ministries and about 60 enterprises were granted the right to enter the foreign market independently. On November 19, the Law "On Individual Labor Activity" legalized private activity and the creation of cooperatives in certain types of production of goods and services. In the autumn of 1986, a resolution was developed, and on January 13, 1987, a resolution was adopted on the establishment and operation of joint ventures on the territory of the USSR. All these were steps towards a market economy, limiting state interference in the activities of enterprises.

"The revolution of expectations".

The years 1985-1986 were associated with an attempt to implement an active social policy. The State has widely formulated tasks in the field of education and health, social security and wages, and in the field of housing

construction. Already on May 14, 1985, resolutions were adopted on priority measures to improve the material well-being of low-income pensioners and families, to strengthen care for lonely elderly citizens, as well as to extend the benefits of participants in the Great Patriotic War to Leningrad residents who worked in the city during the blockade. The document of May 22 provided for the improvement of pension provision for workers, employees, members of collective farms and their families. In January 1986, allowances for military children, single mothers, and widows were increased. At the same time, allowances were introduced to the salaries of employees of a number of regions. In May 1986, the pensions of pensioners permanently residing in rural areas increased, and in September, additional benefits were introduced for participants of the Great Patriotic War and the families of fallen servicemen. It was planned to implement a number of measures to increase wages. In May 1985, a resolution was adopted on improving the remuneration of scientists, designers and industrial technologists, and in July-on increasing the material interest of some categories of agricultural workers. The decision of December 12, 1985, improved the financial incentives for employees of the *MOAT*, heads of workshops and sections of enterprises. Finally, the decree of 17 October 1986 provided for the introduction of new tariff rates and salaries, as well as the removal of restrictions on the wage fund in the production sectors

Radical changes were to be made in the construction of kindergartens, hospitals, and clinics. A special decree was to encourage horticulture and gardening. The Comprehensive Program of Development of Production

of Consumer Goods and Meadows for 1986-2000 promised a breakthrough in this direction. And perhaps the most ambitious was the Housing 2000 program, which provided a solution to one of the most painful social problems in the Soviet Union. According to the document, each family was supposed to live in a separate apartment or house by the year 2000.

All these and other decisions on the social sphere stimulated a "revolution of expectations" associated with the hope for a quick resolution of accumulated problems. By 1985, the social sphere was in a deplorable state, and people wanted a quick fix. And initially it seemed that the political will of the new leadership was enough to carry out the plan. But the "revolution of expectations" played a cruel joke on the April Revolution's initiators. By 1989-1990, most of the promises had not been fulfilled.

The tasks of technical re-equipment of the economy and implementation of social programs required large allocations. Meanwhile, state resources were significantly reduced due to the unfavorable international situation. In 1985, oil prices plummeted, and the Union budget was deprived of billions of dollars in revenues, which in the 70's - early 80's largely compensated the shortcomings of the Soviet economic system, allowing the country to buy abroad the missing food products, light industry products and high-tech equipment. The policy of accelerated development of machine building, adopted in 1985, entailed an increase in technical purchases abroad, reducing the possibility of spending on social needs. Later, in the 1990s, the initiators of reforms admitted that it was a mistake to start reforms from the heavy industry sector. Focusing on agriculture

and light industry would have helped maintain social stability and sustained political support for the large-scale changes outlined.

The Chernobyl disaster

In the spring of 1986 an event occurred that had a shocking impact on Soviet society. On April 26, an accident occurred at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, where Unit 4 exploded during an experiment. Initially there was no clear understanding that the incident was not only a national disaster, but also a global one, but as the information accumulated, the tragedy of what had happened was realized. A large part of Ukraine was contaminated with radiation, but Belarus suffered the heaviest blow (23% of its territory, affecting one in five inhabitants); subsequently, contamination was found in Bryansk and Tula oblasts.

To eliminate the consequences of the accident, a special government commission was created, which coordinated this work in the ministries all over the country. Already in the first days after the catastrophe, a network of medical aid was in operation covering almost a million people. It was decided to evacuate inhabitants from the town of Pripyat. First, people were evacuated from the 10-kilometer zone, and then from the 30-kilometer zone. It turned out to be extremely difficult: many did not want to leave, they had to be moved forcibly. In the first days of May, 135,000 people were relocated and control was established over the entire area. The chemical protection troops were relocated to the accident area and equipment was brought from all over the country.

Scientific institutes in Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev worked around the clock, urgently solving a whole series of unusual problems. The post-Chernobyl months showed the best qualities of Soviet people: dedication, humanity, high morality. Many asked to be sent to the Chernobyl area, offered selfless help.

Elimination of consequences of the explosion in 1986 alone cost 14 billion rubles; it required billions of dollars in subsequent years. Through organized efforts, it was possible to limit the number of casualties and localize the accident. By July the concept of a "sarcophagus" had been developed, and then a unique shelter for the damaged reactor with a continuously operating system for monitoring its condition was erected within a very short period of time. In fact, the second half of 1986 was marked by Chernobyl.

The Chernobyl disaster had a great impact on the socio-political situation in the country as well. Initially stingy information and apparent lack of disclosure questioned the authority of the authorities, who had declared the need for greater openness. The desire of citizens to know the truth in time led to an expansion of the circle of discussion of the previously prohibited topics, contributed to the liberation of public consciousness. The international community also demanded more information transparency in connection with Chernobyl.

The catastrophe demonstrated firsthand the destructive potential of atomic energy, becoming a factor in the intensification of nuclear arms reduction negotiations to be the "New Thinking" in Foreign Policy. By the mid-1980s, the USSR was in a difficult relationship with the

outside world. Soviet foreign policy was made unpopular by the country's involvement in numerous local conflicts, of which the war in Afghanistan was the first. The U.S. administration, led by Reagan, declared a "crusade" against communism and did much to limit economic cooperation between the USSR and Western countries. This did enormous damage to the Soviet economy. Ruin for the country was threatened by the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI, or Star Wars Program), which was launched in the U.S. and involved the transfer of the arms race into space. The Soviet Union's economy was already deformed by exorbitant military expenditures. The desire to reduce them made it reconsider its relations with the "socialist camp" countries and "socialist-oriented" states, making them more pragmatic and, most importantly, cheaper.

The normalization of relations with the outside world required a rethinking of the conceptual foundations of Soviet foreign policy, aimed at discarding obviously unsuccessful approaches and developing in the international arena, which would be in line with contemporary realities, serve the national interests of the country and ensure conditions for internal social and economic progress. The Soviet foreign policy doctrine, dubbed "new political thinking" in international affairs, which Gorbachev announced already in 1985, was designed to solve this difficult problem.

The doctrine meant the rejection of one of the basic blocks of Soviet Marxism - *the theory of the world revolutionary process*. It was axiomatic that the development of humanity would inevitably lead to the establishment of socialist social relations on Earth. The

task of communists in all countries was seen as bringing this time closer through their struggle, which was not national but international in character.

International Relations

According to the official doctrine, the international course of the USSR was determined by two basic principles - proletarian internationalism and peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. The first implied support for communist parties and movements as well as "anti-imperialist" tendencies ("socialist orientation") in both developed and "Third World" countries. Soviet leaders also saw themselves as responsible for defending the "gains of socialism," which did not rule out military aid when there was a 'threat to workers' power. Another principle - "peaceful coexistence" - governed the USSR's relations with capitalist states. And although the "struggle for peace" occupied an important place in Soviet foreign policy, it was regarded as a form of class struggle. Therefore, in our country's international activities, the realization of national interests and the solution of ideological tasks were intertwined. In turn, this was reflected in the complex combination of cooperation and rivalry that characterized the ties of the "Eastern" and "Western" blocs. Ideologically, both sides held irreconcilable positions, viewing the entire world as an arena of struggle for the assertion of either "socialist" or "democratic" values.

Initially, it was in the sphere of foreign policy that the new Soviet leadership demonstrated its willingness to depart decisively from traditional approaches. First of all,

it was concluded that in the new era, in the nuclear age, the global challenges and threats facing humanity are much more important and dangerous than those contradictions between states of different social systems. Universal human values, which are higher than class values, come to the fore. *Therefore, the system of international relations should no longer be seen as a sphere of class struggle, but as an area of moderation and cooperation.* For our country this meant drawing closer to states outside the "socialist commonwealth". The assertion of the priority of human values entailed the abandonment of proletarian internationalism and solidarity, which gradually disappeared from the lexicon of Soviet leaders, to be replaced by an approach based on freedom of choice.

The notion that security can only be universal led to a radical change in approaches to ensuring national security. The traditional "balance of power" of the Cold War era was to be replaced by a "balance of interests" corresponding to the new times, which, in turn, implied the abandonment of the arms race and the transition to national defense construction on the basis of reasonable sufficiency. Armaments were to be sufficient only for the organization of defense, while surplus weapons were to be eliminated in order to reduce the threats of potential aggression. Initially, the block of ideas under the title "new thinking and universal values" covered only the international sphere, in 1988-1991 it began to include those previously considered to be attributes of "democratic" societies: the priority of human rights, the system of separation of powers, civil society, etc.

In 1985-1989, the Soviet leadership focused primarily on

relations with the United States, whose voice was decisive in untying all international "knots". Between 1985 and 1991, Gorbachev met with U.S. presidents nine times. Already in November 1985, the first Soviet-American summit was held in Geneva after a long break, designed to renew the dialogue and improve relations between the two countries. At the second meeting in Reykjavik in October 1986, the parties were already close to making a breakthrough in the reduction of nuclear weapons.

Gorbachev proposed three draft agreements. The first: to reduce the arsenal of strategic missiles by 50 percent within 5 years. Second: return to the "zero option" of R. Reagan (1981) and completely destroy U.S. and Soviet intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles and Europe. The third: not to exercise the right to withdraw from the indefinite ABM Treaty (1972) for 10 years, with the U.S. limiting its work on the INF program to laboratory research. All three projects were supposed to be considered as a single package. However, the U.S. side was ready to sign only the first two agreements. Gorbachev accused the U.S. side of seeking superiority, and Reagan accused the Soviet side of trying to impose unacceptable conditions.

In the end, none of the agreements was signed in Reykjavik. Later, in February 1987, the Kremlin made concessions and abandoned the "package" approach, which allowed for gradual progress toward nuclear disarmament.

The Soviet leader attached great importance to establishing personal trusting relations with Western

leaders, which, in his opinion, made it possible to quickly resolve long term problems that had accumulated over the years. In the West, however, the "new thinking" was initially rather reserved, seeing in it primarily the Soviet Union's desire to ease the burden of the arms race and gain access to modern technology.

In 1985-1986 the development of relations with the countries of the Warsaw Treaty Organization continued. In 1985 it was again extended for another 20 years. In accordance with the new course inside the USSR, the Comprehensive Program of Scientific and Technological Progress of CMEA member-states up to 2000 was approved. Regular summit meetings with the leaders of these countries continued. However, new overtones began to be heard at them: the Soviet side made it clear that it intended to move away from the role of "big brother" in its relations with partners and that the USSR no longer intended to interfere in the internal affairs of its neighbors.

Necessary Reforms

From "acceleration" to "perestroika. The course on acceleration of socio-economic development was an important stage in the comprehension of the situation which had formed in the country by the spring of 1985. The decisions taken at that time were based on the idea that "one cannot live like before" and reflected a certain philosophy of action, the *desire of the leadership to take up the solution of accumulated problems rather than the result of a well thought system of measures.*

At the same time Gorbachev and his entourage were gradually forming their own concept of necessary reforms. The XXVII Congress of the CPSU became a certain boundary, after which important changes in the interpretation of reforms were outlined. The formula of acceleration was filled with new content, and the idea of the need for more comprehensive and profound reforms was promoted. In May-July 1986, the term "acceleration" was gradually replaced by the term "perestroika". Disclosing it, the Secretary General stressed that "perestroika" encompassed not only the economy, but also social relations, the political system, the spiritual and ideological sphere, the style and methods of work of the party and all cadres. He put an equal sign between "perestroika" and revolution, emphasizing that "perestroika is not a one-time, single-step act, but a process that will take place within the framework of a certain historical period".

In the summer of 1986, Gorbachev comes up with one more idea that is becoming louder and louder with time. It is the theme of conscious or unconscious opposition to the changes that the top political leadership is aiming at. The party and state bureaucracy, interested in preserving the obsolete order and their own privileges, became the main opponent of the reforms. Sociologists of Gorbachev's circle gave an extensive list of groups susceptible to conservative sentiments. This list was impressive, since it included the entire top echelon of managers.

These people the new leader contrasted with others - "innovators", "active, restless, of the restless", who are destroying the old. The new leader contrasted these

people with others. In his speeches, he increasingly appealed to the intelligentsia and youth, two social groups whose intellectual potential and dynamism allowed him to see them as the most natural allies of the large-scale changes conceived. This is how the notion of "perestroika" was formed, as a revolution initiated by an "enlightened" leadership "from above" and carried out with the active support of "from below".

From the middle of 1986, Gorbachev began to repeat that changes in society were not happening fast enough. Among the main reasons, he singled out two: the continuing passivity of the overwhelming majority of the population and the adherence of administrative structures to directive forms of management. In this regard, the problem of democratization is put not only as one of the goals of the reforms, but also as an obligatory prerequisite for them. "The most important part of perestroika is democratization". We give real rights. But who will implement them? Are there people who are capable and brave enough to exercise the rights? "We have weaned them off the use of democracy," Gorbachev said at a Politburo meeting in the summer of 1986. "Therefore, we must include people in the process of perestroika through the democratization of society," he developed the same thought in September.

In mid-1986, significant changes took place in the interpretation of the concept of "glasnost". The initiators of "perestroika" began to regard it as a major lever of democratization, increasing the social activity of the still rather inert population. A considerable increase in awareness, a higher level of critically discussed problems, and the demand for the previously untapped

intellectual potential - all this was supposed to help overcome ideological dogmatism and break old stereotypes of political behavior, which, ultimately, was to accelerate the perestroika processes in all spheres. In this logic, glasnost and intellectual emancipation were to promote and optimize reforms, enriching perestroika theory and practice with an analysis of foreign and domestic experience. The role of ideological opposition to conservatism was assigned to the press. Speaking in 1986 to members of the mass media, Gorbachev said: "Many of our conservative mistakes and miscalculations, causing stagnation of thought and action in the party and the state, are due to the absence of opposition, alternative views and evaluations. And here, at this stage of society's development, our press could become such a kind of opposition."

In the same year, organizational preparations for the "offensive of glasnost" took place: new people were put at the head of a number of mass media outlets. Izvestia, Or Nek, Moscow News, Komsomolskaya Pravda, Argumenty! Facts, Moskovskaya Pravda, Moskovsky Komsomolets, Yunost, "Novyi Mir", and some other newspapers and magazines, which became the most acute and widely read publications in 1987-1991. At the same time, the "glasnost policy" did not mean the introduction of freedom of speech, being initially a "dirigible" phenomenon. The content of information campaigns was determined by the briefings of media managers that were regularly conducted by the ideological departments of the CPSU Central Committee.

In the second half of 1986, two different approaches to

the question of how to reform society emerged in the USSR. Part of them believed that it was necessary to focus on the economy. They saw the essence of the reforms in a radical change in the management of national economy and labor motivation. The system of planned, centralized management of the economy was supposed to be transferred from the material and real criteria to the priority of cost criteria, and the sphere of state regulation was to be reduced. Supporters of this approach considered one of the main tasks to be the strict interrelation of personal, collective and national interests. It was supposed to achieve this through the implementation of a complex of diversified measures, among which a special place was given to the pricing reform.

All this was eventually to lead to the legalization of private property. The private sector was to develop in addition to the public sector. The principal feature of this approach was the intention to implement radical economic reforms with the inviolability of the political system, designed to maintain stability and order during the inevitably painful period of mass social adaptation to new conditions.

From Economic to Political Reform

The second focused on a different order of reform. In the middle - second half of 1986, Gorbachev and his entourage came to the conviction that the solution to all problems rests with the ineffectiveness of the existing political system in the USSR. From that time on, its reform was seen as the main condition for the

progressive movement of Soviet society. In the future, it was planned to reform, reduce the "global" role of the CPSU in the life of society and the state; organize full-fledged elections to the Soviets, increase the responsibility and dependence of deputies on voters; achieve real independence of the judiciary; establish all-round independence, organizational forms of exercising the right to demonstrate, freedom of speech, conscience, press, assembly, the right to free movement; move toward a deep democratization of economic life. All these questions were to be raised at a special Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee which I was intensively preparing for in the fall and winter of 1986. The problems of economic reform were relegated to the back burner.

In December there were two events that had "prophetic" meaning. On December 3, academician A.D. Sakharov, the spiritual leader of the Western-oriented Soviet dissidents, was returned from Gorky exile. At the beginning of the month, T.D. Abuladze's film, *Repentance* was shown in cinemas nationwide. Formally dedicated to the condemnation of the abstract "Dictator", the film left no doubt about who it was really about. The physiognomic resemblance of the main character to Leonid Beria, the recreation of the atmosphere of horror produced by the senseless bloody repressions gave the film a version of events that went far beyond the official interpretation of history of the 1920s-50s. The film's release was later called "the beginning of the collapse of Communist ideology. In this way, the leading group demonstrated in what direction and how far they were ready to go in the future rethinking of history and politics.

In the first year and a half after April 1985, the changes

that were objectively urgent occurred on the basis of the political approaches that had been outlined during the Andropov period. In the West, this time is not accidentally called "authoritarian perestroika". The end of 1986 was a certain borderline in the history of transformation of 1985-1991. By this time, the economic difficulties began to show themselves gradually. They were the result, on the one hand, of an adverse combination of circumstances (the drop in oil prices, the costs of mitigating the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster), and on the other - of Gorbachev's own miscalculations (increased allocation for machinery with reduced purchases of consumer goods abroad, large-scale social activities, and the anti-alcohol campaign). All these activities were objectively pro-inflationary in nature and contributed to fiscal destabilization, which preceded a significant deterioration in the economy of the USSR.

The significance of this circumstance was not duly realized at the time. Moreover, in the second half of 1986, a strategic course was taken towards the priority transformation of society's political system. The progressing deterioration of the economic parameters of development and the aggravation of the situation in the social sphere became the background against which the main political and ideological battles of those years unfolded. Under these conditions, the reformers had to be extremely cautious and thoroughly calculate their further steps, because the credit of trust obtained by the Soviet leader in 1985 could not last indefinitely.

§ 2 - The Beginning of the Restructuring of the System of social relations in the USSR. 1987-Spring 1990

Democratization and Glasnost.

In a certain sense, it is the key period, which in many ways determined the subsequent development of events. Gorbachev's transformation strategy was formulated and its implementation began at this time. The main efforts were aimed at awakening society, and increasing the activity of all those interested in the renewal processes. The new plan of reforms was announced at the January Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee in 1987. It was fundamentally new in that, in fact, for the first time in Soviet history, the main attention was concentrated not on changes in the economy, but on the transformation of the political system, which in the end should give a powerful impetus to the socio-economic and spiritual development of society.

In his report at the plenum, M. S. Gorbachev stated that by the mid-1980s the country had developed a "braking mechanism" that was holding back socio-economic development and preventing the benefits of socialism from being discovered. Its roots are in serious shortcomings in the functioning of institutions of socialist democracy, outdated political and theoretical attitudes, and in the conservative mechanism of management. The deepening of socialist democracy and development of self-government of the people were offered as the main means to interrupt the "braking mechanism". The

questions of improving the work of Soviets, trade unions, Komsomol were considered; the necessity to increase the role of court, to strengthen the prosecutor's supervision, to guarantee the rights and freedoms of citizens was mentioned. Really revolutionary was the focus on the reform of the electoral process at all levels: for the first time in many years it was proposed to hold elections on an alternative basis.

After the plenum, the formation of a new understanding of transparency was completed. It was beginning to be regarded as a means of awakening, as a tool for shaping public consciousness in a certain direction, as a form of control over the actions of sluggish administrators, and as a way to mobilize active supporters of the "perestroika". Glasnost revolutionized and politicized society, greatly expanding the possibilities of public analysis: but the range of available information, removal of forbidden topics, the possibility to ask any questions and propose variants of answers was not developed.

Decisions of the January plenum stimulated an awakening of public activity, formation of proactive social conduct connected to an interested discussion of a wide range of painful problems. The self-organization of society that began to emerge manifested itself in the so-called "informal" movements. Discussion clubs, amateur associations and groups began to appear in many cities, which met the needs, first of all, of the ordinary intelligentsia and youth, for free communication and active useful activity. A club of inter-professional communication "Perestroika", created in Leningrad in February 1987, has gained a certain fame. The initiative group included young economists, sociologists, and

philosophers, including I.B. Chubais, E. T. Gaidar, V. Kikot. Its activity was aimed at "working out programs of effective and non-violent resolution of social conflicts, as well as carrying out expert reviews of issues of the country's economic and political development." The first major discussion organized by the club took place in March 1987 and was devoted to the discussion of the draft of the Law "On State Enterprise (Association)".

During this year, prominent economists spoke at club meetings: G. X. Popov, "From the Economist's Point of View"; B. I. Danilov-Danilyan, "Economic Problems of Perestroika"; N. Y. Petrakov, "Economic Management and Democratization. One of the meeting centers for representatives of the informal movement in Moscow was the Social Initiatives Club, established under the Soviet Sociological Association.

The policy of glasnost stimulated the development of the so-called alternative press. Although its circulation was limited, it was here, nevertheless, that acute problems of public life were discussed quite frankly and sharply. Publications of this kind not only became a means of expressing certain positions, but also played an important role in the organizational consolidation of "informals". By the fall of 1987, there were more than 100 "non-formal" newspapers and magazines.

The autumn of 1987 was a watershed in the development of the socio-political situation in the USSR. It was also influenced by the new assessments of history and politics voiced in connection with the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution. In his report "October and Perestroika Revolution Continues"

and his book "Perestroika and New Thinking for Our Country and for the World", the party leader noted the creative nature of Leninism, emphasizing Lenin's ability to abandon dogmas that did not correspond to life. From a historical perspective, he drew attention to the importance of the living creativity of the masses and the need for bold social experiments in the creation of the new. He spoke of the importance of inner-party discussions, which helped to formulate the necessary decisions; of the underutilized possibilities of the NEP; while recognizing the turning point of collectivization, he paid unusually much attention to its negative consequences. The question of the social cost of the revolutionary transformations was raised.

At the official level, the creation of an administrative-command system by the end of the 1930s, which not only embraced the economy but also spread to the superstructure, was acknowledged. While acknowledging the "inconsistency" of Stalin's assessment, more was said about the lawlessness committed by him and "his inner circle". Pointing to the baselessness of the repression against the leaders of the party, state, as well as cultural figures, Gorbachev called to "bring into the house" suspended in the mid-60s, the process of "restoration of justice" - to rehabilitate the innocent victims. He rehabilitation of N.I. Bukharin, which was heard in the report, as the beginning of this. The report named Leonid Brezhnev as the person directly responsible for the escalation of negative processes in the life of society in the 1970s and early 1980s.

Gorbachev's report resulted in the radicalization of the

policy of glasnost, which, in turn, stimulated the polarization of public sentiments and, later, political division. A campaign of "de-brezhnev-inization" was actively pursued: the media exposed abuses and corruption involving many "first persons" of the "stagnation era". The information on the so-called "Uzbek case" - about large-scale embezzlement in the republic - was particularly resonant. The new powerful impetus was given to the campaign of "de-Stalinization," which took a broad sweep and had various forms.

In January 1988, the Commission on rehabilitation of victims of repressions of the late 30's was established under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. At the same time, "de-Stalinization" began "from below". Established by a number of creative organizations, the historical and Educational Society Memorial set itself the task of promoting the complete rehabilitation of the victims of repressions, providing aid to the victims, creating a monument to the victims of Stalinism on the territory of the USSR, and restoring the historical truth about the illegal and terrorist methods of political activity.

However, the ongoing events were assessed ambiguously in the public consciousness, since under the slogan "revival of the Leninist image of socialism" the mass media launched a campaign to "demythologize" the past, in which the ideological values of socialism were criticized. On the pages of some publications, the elimination of "white spots" gradually turned into painting over entire historical periods with black paint. At the same time the notion of "Stalinism" is increasingly associated with what happened in the country in the 20's

to mid 50's, questioning the socialism of the society built in the USSR.

All this led to the fact that at the turn of 1987-1988 there was a division about the course pursued in the country. At the same time, some believed that the reforms were going too slowly and did not yield results - this was the spirit in which Boris Yeltsin's speech at the October (1987) Central Committee plenum was assessed. Others believed that socialism was being "surrendered" under the banner of perestroika, while the goals of the reformers remained vague. These sentiments were reflected in N.A. Andreeva's sensational spring 1988 article "I cannot compromise my principles. Both positions were sharply condemned by the Gorbachevites.

B. Yeltsin was even deprived of his post in the Moscow City Committee of the CPSU. The main political event of 1988 was the 19th Party Conference. It was held in a completely new atmosphere, reflecting the changes of recent years. It was the first relatively free forum in many years at which the really different viewpoints on key issues were expressed. The indifference of the audience manifested itself in a standing ovation to some and a "slamming" of others. The conference's impact on the ideological climate in society was reinforced by the broadcasting of its work on television.

Gorbachev's speech indicated a further ideological evolution of the party leader. Principles which used to be regarded as attributes of "bourgeois democracy" - human rights, the rule of law, the separation of powers, and parliamentarism - were presented as "universal". In

fact, the intention was declared to create a civil society.

New approaches were concretized in the proposals to reform the political system of society, which touched upon two basic institutions: the state and the party. The planned changes were to lead to a real separation of functions between them. The party had to leave the sphere of operative management of social processes. Two new state institutions, the Congress of People's Deputies and the permanently acting Parliament (Supreme Soviet), were to facilitate the democratization of society and enhance the influence of citizens on decision-making. At the same time an attempt was made to provide a smooth transition from the old political system to the new one. Of the total of 2,250 deputies who were to make up the body of people's deputies, 750 were to be elected from the so-called public organizations at their congresses and plenums (we had in mind the party, trade union, cooperative, youth, women, veteran, scientific, creative, etc.). This implied, especially important at the first stage, less painful incorporation of the active part of the traditional elite into the new political system, which should have tempered possible resistance to reform and ensured the continuity of power and administration.

Gorbachev's proposal to combine the posts of the head of the Party Committee and the chairman of the corresponding level of the Soviet was equally unconventional. This, first, reflected the real situation in the USSR by "legalizing" it. Second, it should have directed the party organizations to look for a leader not just Party, but authoritative with the electorate - such a person could not head the Soviet. At the same time,

such an approach put the party leader and the organization itself under the control of the nonpartisan masses. All this could substantially advance democratization in the party.

At the conference there were also critical speeches to the new party leadership. It was pointed out that during the three years they failed to achieve tangible changes, first of all in the socio-economic sphere. There were accusations of the lack of a clear plan for change and excessive improvisation. The most vivid criticism, which reflected a skeptical attitude toward the changes that were taking place, was the speech by writer Yuri Bondarev. Many people found his comparison of Perestroika to be accurate - *it was an airplane launched without knowing whether it was "going to land"*.

In the fall of 1988, work began on implementing the measures outlined by the 19th Party Conference. Having satisfied A. A. Gromyko's request to retire, on October 1, 1988, M. S. Gorbachev became the head of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, thus concentrating the highest party and state power in his hands. The same session of the Supreme Soviet approved amendments to the USSR Constitution, which legalized the future reform of the political system. In September, the largest reorganization of the CPSU Central Committee apparatus in many years began. Instead of more than 20 "branch" departments, 6 committees were established, in accordance with the main directions of the party work under the new conditions. All of them were headed by Secretaries of the Central Committee. The total number of employees of the apparatus was significantly reduced, which

emphasized the desire to free the highest party bodies from the functions of operational management. At the same time, specialists who were not "burdened" with the experience of long-term apparatus work and capable of shaping its modern style were attracted to work in the Central Committee. The model created in the Center was to become a model for lower-level Party committees.

The ideological atmosphere of the fall of 1988 was also influenced by other events. The Decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of August 14, 1946, on the Zvezda and Leningrad magazines was annulled on October 20, and the editorial of the Kommunist disavowed other Party acts of the second half of the 1940s on questions of culture and art. Additional measures were taken to return books and magazines previously withdrawn from wide circulation from special depositories.

The Politburo Commission for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Unjustified Repressions intensified its work. It resulted in the adoption of measures to cancel the decisions of extrajudicial bodies ("two", "three", etc.). It was also allowed to convene rehabilitation commissions at the Soviets of various levels.

Another important step in the field of ideology was the abolition of restrictions on newspaper and magazine subscriptions in 1989. The restrictions were imposed on non-partisan and non-political periodicals of great readership demand. In 1987-1988, they were supplemented by social-political literature of the opposition. It was not by chance that "informal"

associations actively participated in the campaign to abolish restrictions on subscriptions. As a result, for the first time, in 1989 the citizens of the USSR were free to choose the newspapers and magazines of their choice. This was a major step in the departure from administrative methods of information regulation, turning the press into a relatively independent subject of ideological and political intrigue under the conditions of rapid polarization of society.

The expansion of awareness, the encouragement of socially significant amateurism, and the gradual return to the public consciousness of names and ideas once withdrawn, greatly stimulated intellectual activity, primarily in the scientific and creative environment. And although the party leadership tried to regulate this process, it became more and more difficult to define its limits: the intelligentsia began to feel much freer in raising issues of concern, going beyond formal limits.

Thus, in the fall of 1988, the gradual rehabilitation of A. Solzhenitsyn began, virtually without prior arrangement, "from below". A group of writers and filmmakers put forward the question about the abolition of the discriminatory measures against him and about the restoration of the writer in the creative union. The proposal to rehabilitate him was first actively opposed by the Party and the state apparatus. There was no unity in the Politburo either. However, Gorbachev did not want to quarrel with the intelligentsia. As a result, the publication of the writer's sharpest anti-Soviet works, in particular *The Gulag Archipelago*, began in central magazines in 1989. Preparations for the 19th party conference and its decisions pushed the ideological and political division

among the "un-officials. Along with supporters of improving socialism, those who preferred the liberal choice became increasingly vocal.

In June-July 1988, "popular fronts" were organized all over the country, and their representatives were able to hold a working meeting in Yalta on August 13. The largest structures at that time were the Baikal (Irkutsk), Ivanovo and Ural Popular Fronts. The result of this initiative was the creation of the Russian Popular Front in mid-December. The process of forming structures with a broader scope than the elite clubs resulted in a surge in rally activity. Significantly, the official authorities immediately (in July 1988) responded by adopting a new act regulating the holding of rallies and demonstrations. In September and October, the Moscow People's Front launched a broad campaign against the introduced rules and subscription limits. Beginning in October, numerous thousands of political rallies were held in Moscow (on October 7, November 20, and December 10), during which time the "informal" movement gradually shed its spontaneity and became more organized.

In the middle and second half of 1988, overtly anti-communist groups became more active. The Democratic Union rallies of August 21 and September 5 had a notable resonance. In the first case, the meeting in Pushkin Square was associated with the 20th anniversary of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and in the second, with the 70th anniversary of the "red terror. In fact, this was the first time that calls for the violent overthrow of the existing Soviet system were not effectively countered by the law enforcement agencies.

Initially, informal movements in the Baltic states were quite highly organized, as the process of mass politicization based on the national idea unfolded. In the autumn of 1988, the Popular Fronts were also formed in Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. A common "enemy" - the allied party-state and departmental bodies - determined the ideological and organizational solidarity of the Baltic Popular Front members and Russian "informals," who initially considered themselves part of a single protest movement. At the same time, Russian "democrats" were not without jealousy when they looked toward their Baltic allies, who had created an outpacing model for the democratic movement and managed to rally under their banner nearly the majority of citizens of those republics. Russian "democrats" justified the Baltic's role as an "advanced periphery," where civil society sprouted more rapidly than in the rest of the country.

The January 1987 move toward democratization and glasnost had important repercussions by the end of 1988. By this time, there was a rapid evolution of ideas about the ways, the degree of radicality, and the ultimate goals of reforming society. And what is especially important, at this time "perestroika" acquired autonomy from its initiators, which opened up possible alternatives in the further development of events.

The beginning of the reform of the political system

The events of 1985-1988 "unleashed" a number of very important socio-economic, sociopolitical, and ideological processes, which came to life in 1989-1990, destabilizing public life and complicating the reform of

the political system. 1989 was a turning point in the history of perestroika: at this time the objective prerequisites for a broad anti-Gorbachev and anti-communist opposition were being formed. The negative trends in the development of the economy became irreversible. The deterioration of the economic situation was followed by a widespread exacerbation of social problems. In March, the first miners' strike took place, which in summer already covered the entire industry. In 1989-1990, the geography and scale of the strike movement expanded, and political demands were added to economic ones. In most republics of the Soviet Union, political life was increasingly colored by ethnic differences, leading to the aggravation of existing and the emergence of new contradictions and conflicts. Armed clashes continued to escalate (the Transcaucasus, Central Asia), the Baltic model of separatism was practiced, and the Russian factor emerged on the Soviet political scene as an independent factor for the first time. Continuing criticism of the Soviet period of Russian history led to the rejection of socialism as a social system, and the liberal-democratic alternative to the demise of the Soviet Union was gaining ground. At the same time, the political opposition was taking shape, with its radical part initially aiming for a tough struggle for control of power.

The socio-political situation in early 1989 was largely determined by the elections to the First Congress of People's Deputies. Informal club associations established at the previous stage began to turn into organizational cells for the nomination and support of independent candidates and the preparation of their electoral programs. The Moscow Tribune Club was

popular in the capital, whose members did much to support democratic candidates. "Democrat" in the terminology of early 1989 - an active supporter of reforms, the antipode of "conservative partocrats". It was against the latter that the main fire of criticism was directed, and their unwillingness to change the existing order was associated with failures in the economy in 1985-1988.

This led to the fact that many "nomenklatura" candidates were defeated. For example, in Leningrad, neither the first secretaries of the Regional Committee (Y. Solovyov) nor of the City CPSU Committee (A. Gerasimov) were elected. At the same time, a whole group of independent candidates with radical programs: A. Sobchak, Y. Boldyrev, A. Denisov and others received mandates there. The election results of the Moscow City constituency looked scandalous for the party apparatus: despite the obstacles, the "disgraced" Boris Yeltsin triumphed there with a record number of votes - about 90 %. The popularity of many independent candidates was aided by the mass rallies widespread at that time as a means of expressing public opinion and protest sentiments. At the rallies one could hear the most radical proposals and demands. Soon the rallying element became more controllable and was often used as an effective means of putting pressure on the official authorities.

The most important political event of 1989 was the First Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR (May - June), which put the reform of the political system into the practical phase. The Congress elected a permanent bicameral Supreme Soviet of the USSR and its

Chairman Mikhail Gorbachev. There was a fierce debate on a wide range of problems, which was witnessed by many citizens of the country on television. The deputies focused their attention on the economic problems worrying the society. Not many people were satisfied with the governmental program formulated in the report of N. I. Ryzhkov. The emphasis on a step-by-step and gradual transition to the market economy was not in line with the urgency of the socio-economic situation. The report was criticized. There were various proposals, including a referendum on the advisability of preserving the collective and state farms, the rapid transition to the republican and regional cost-accounting, and the importance of limiting the arbitrariness of the agencies.

A.D. Sakharov proposed to adopt the Decree on power, which implied the cancellation of Article 6 of the USSR Constitution on the leading role of the Party in the life of the Soviet society and the establishment of independence of the highest state officials from the CPSU. A lot of time at the congress was devoted to the discussion of the problems of interethnic relations. Their acuteness was due to the fact that two weeks before its opening there was a bloodshed in Tbilisi, which resulted from the clash of demonstrators with the army units. It provoked anti-Russian rhetoric at the congress.

It was decided to create a special congress commission to investigate the causes of the tragedy. At the suggestion of the delegations of the Baltic republics, a commission was also formed for investigating the secret appendix to the "Molotov-Ribbentrop pact" (1939).

For the first time in many years, the First Congress of

People's Deputies began to form an organized political opposition. On June 7, 1989, deputy from Orenburg, V. Shapovalenko, announced the creation of the Interregional Deputies' Group (MDG), which initially consisted of 150 people. In the summer, the group increased to 388, of which 286 represented the RSFSR. The final organizational constitution of the IWG took place on July 29, at the first general conference of its members. Five co-chairs were elected at it: Y. N. Afanasyev, B. N. Yeltsin, V. Palm, I'. X. Popov and A.D. Sakharov, and a Coordination Council of more than 20 people. Boris Yeltsin spoke on the program theses of the group, and defined the following basic ideas: recognition of private property, decentralization of power, economic independence and real economic sovereignty of the republics.

The reform of the political system was associated with making the Elections the main source of power, which in political language meant the necessity of revoking Article 6 of the USSR Constitution securing the leading role of the CPSU. In the economic sphere the emphasis was placed on an accelerated transition to market relations. One of the most important proposals was to redistribute the objects of public property: only the branches that required centralized management were to remain in the hands of the state. In the social sphere the creation of a system of benefits for the poor and the provision of all free social services on a competitive basis between institutions working in this area was declared.

Subsequently, the ideas of the MDG were minted in five <schemes>: de-centralization, de-monopolization, disintegration, de-ideologization, democratization.

With the popularity of the democratic deputies in both capitals and some big cities, their positions were not so strong to influence the official structures. Therefore, initially they faced the problem of attracting political allies, which also emerged in the pre-Soviet period. The emerging rapprochement with nationalists and separatists ended with the formation of a political alliance at the First Congress.

Another ally of the constituting opposition was the strike movement. Interest in workers' initiatives in the "democratic" milieu had existed for a long time, but became more substantive in the summer of 1989. By this time, in the regions covered by the miners' strikes, purely political associations were being formed. On August 17 at the conference of strike committees of mines, production associations and cities of Donbass, there was founded the Union of strike committees of the region, adopted its Statute and organized a Coordinating Council. The miners of Vorkuta and Karaganda coordinated their actions with Donbass. Of the MDG (Interregional Deputies' Group) leaders, the closest contacts with the leaders of the strike committees were maintained by G. H. Popov and N. I. Travkin, who, during their trips to the mining regions, conducted negotiations on coordination of actions with the workers' leaders. The objective basis of this alliance was the aversion to the central power structures: the miners "pressed" on the union departments, demanding a quick solution of the problems that had been accumulating for decades. The "democrats" suggested when and what steps (slogans, protests, strikes) should be taken, connecting the miners to the general political struggle for power.

The capacity of the opposition in this struggle was largely strengthened by the presence in its ranks of a bright charismatic populist leader. In 1989, the degree of Yeltsin's popularity was a reflection of the level of Gorbachev's declining authority, who was perceived as his political antipode. After the death in December of that year of Sakharov, who had unquestionable authority in the democratic movement, Yeltsin became the main leader of the anti-communist forces.

While the opposition movement was on the rise, the situation in the Communist Party was different. Traditional party structures proved ill-suited to compete with the new democratic organizations. The lag of democratization in the party from what was happening in society was obvious to many. However, the Party Central Committee was in no hurry to decide on a strategy for restructuring its activities under the new conditions. With the reforms lagging behind "from above", impulses began to come "from below". On August 2, at a meeting of the Moscow Party Club it was decided to create the Democratic Platform in the CPSU. Its leaders, V.N. Lysenko, I.B. Chubat and V.N. Shostakovsky, announced the establishment of an organization of communists for multi-partyism and radical democratization of the CPSU. Singleism in the CPSU; transitioned to the creation of the Communist Party of Russia; and a transformation of the CPSU into a parliamentary party. Gradually, kommunist who shared other views also united. Thus, between 1989 and early 2000, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was dissolved. Between 1989 and 1990, the Soviet Communist Party had in fact launched a process of

political "separation" not officially recognized by its leadership.

The year 1989 saw rapid changes in the ideological life of society. More and more often in the publications of scientists, especially philosophers, one could read that the USSR was built not socialism, not even early socialism, but on barracks pseudo-socialism, totalitarianism. It was proposed to get rid of the authoritarian-bureaucratic social and political system completely and without residue. This was seen as an ascension to a democratic, humane society, through the movement toward a kind of "world civilization. These intentions were supposed to be realized through the implementation of an anti-totalitarian, anti-campaign revolution, which would solve its problems during a certain transitional period. It is indicative that in Gorbachev's late 1989 work, for the first time such a high-ranking leader did not mention the term "real socialism," replacing it with "socialist idea," which actually meant *denying the socialist nature of society built in the Soviet Union. Hence the task of not improving, but the most radical reforming of "real socialism"*.

By 1990, the political system of the USSR was in crisis. The beginning of its reform led to a general decline in the level of controllability of social processes. The transfer of power functions from party structures to Soviet structures, which were not organizationally prepared for this, led to a weakening of centralized influence on the economy and politics, inter-ethnic relations, and social processes. Contemporaries noted a widespread "escalation of impunity". At the same time, they realized

that it was necessary to create a political institution, which would compensate for the loss of the CPSU integration function.

Under these conditions, in January-February 1990, Gorbachev's entourage decided to push the idea of introducing a presidential system in the USSR. The notion that he "lacked power" was associated with the growing illegitimacy of the party in the conditions of the policy of separation of functions between the CPSU and the state, then it became difficult and inefficient to intervene in conflict situations through the party apparatus.

The establishment of the post of the USSR President at the 3rd Congress of People's Deputies in March 1990 happened simultaneously with the abolition of the 6th article of the Constitution regarding the leading role of the CPSU. Gorbachev assessed the event as follows: *"This, comrades, is literally a coup d'etat, a full completion of the changes in the political system"*. Indeed, the revolutionary meaning of what happened was that the supreme state power was legally separated from the party power and became accountable to all citizens, regardless of their political views. The party itself was legally transformed into a public organization aimed at fighting for influence by purely political means.

Almost simultaneously with the reform of the political system in the winter of 1989/90, a movement for Russian sovereignty was unfolding, which became a major factor of union significance. There were two main reasons for the all-Russian consolidation: the decline of the effectiveness of the union structures' management;

and the chronic unwillingness of the union leadership to deal with Russian problems. Russians' self-consciousness was also hurt by the fact that the *national regions' discontent was often directed against Russia and the Russians, rather than against the very "internationalist" center*, from which Russia suffered at least as much as the other republics.

The search for a solution to national problems

The explosion of the "national bomb" was completely unexpected for the initiators of reforms. In April 1990, M. Gorbachev said: "Before, it was thought that all the issues were solved, but they could not be dealt with. *In the first phase of perestroika, your humble servant sincerely believed that there were no big problems here. That's how we were brought up.*

A number of reasons lay behind the aggravation of national contradictions. First, the long-standing bureaucratic unification of all aspects of life had a negative impact on the ethno-cultural sphere. The slogan of "socialist internationalism" often concealed a great-power cosmopolitanism, which caused natural aversion among all nationalities. Second, during the years of Soviet rule, all of the country's peoples suffered numerous injustices in various forms (from deportations to persecutions of national culture). Perestroika was perceived as a time for approving a new national policy. Third, in 1918-1920, the contradiction between the national composition of the population and the national-state structure of the USSR was established. While more than 100 large and small nations lived in the country, only 14 "chosen" ones received "their" union republic.

Others were content with various levels of autonomy, while others had no autonomy at all. The desire to "equalize rights" was all the more justified because the "titular" peoples in "their" territories had advantages over other national groups in terms of political, economic, social, and ethno-cultural development. Finally, (fourth) local nationalism served as a powerful weapon for the local elites in their struggle against the Union Center for control of republican resources in the coming economic reform.

All of this led to the emergence of nationalist problems in 1988-1991 (Yakutsk and Alma-Ata, 1986) and a series of bloody interethnic conflicts in different parts of the USSR: in Karabakh and Sumgait (Azerbaijan, 1988), Novyi Uzel (Kazakhstan, 1989), Fergana (Uzbekistan, 1989), and Chisinau (Uzbekistan, 1989). Chisinau (Moldova, 1989), Sukhumi (Abkhazia, 1989), Baku (Azerbaijan, 1990), and Tskhinvali (South Ossetia, 1990). If in 1989, - 221 people were killed in them, in six months of 1990 - 632. By that time there were 4,648 riots and more than 600,000 people became refugees in their own country. Interethnic instability increasingly became the motive for emigration from the Soviet Union.

But the resulting document "On the National Policy of the Party in Modern Conditions" contained practically no new approaches, and the decisions of the plenum, as contemporary authors believe, even aggravated the situation. Only in April - May, 1990, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted some laws to regulate the interethnic and federative relations: "About increasing the responsibility for encroaching on national equality of citizens and violent breaking the unity of the territory of

the USSR", "About the order of solving questions concerning secession of Union republics from the USSR", "About the basis of economic relations of the USSR, Union and autonomous republics".

However, these acts appeared when the central authority was already weakened and the situation in the republics demanded a strong political will and immediate and decisive actions. As a result, in all directions of the national policy the leadership of the country lagged behind in making necessary decisions, and if it acted, it was extremely sluggish.

Ethnic Troubles

This was evident in the Transcaucasus, Central Asia, and the Baltics. Gorbachev's ineffectiveness in the "national" direction was one of the factors of his political credibility's permanent decline.

Nationalists in all republics used a similar set of motives. At first, environmental motifs were used. The natural reaction to the harmful effects of industrial development on the natural environment and health outside the RSFSR took the form of concern for the protection of the ethnic environment, and the neglect of ecological safety by the Soviet agencies as, at best, non-difference to the fate of non-Russian peoples.

The ideas of national revival were transformed in a similar way. Suddenly, it was "discovered" that all non-Russian peoples were in a state of deep cultural decline, de-ethnicization, and even on the verge of extinction.

The reasons were attributed to the "malignant policy" of Moscow. The idea of non-equivalent economic exchange (naturally, in favor of the center) and the possibility to rapidly improve the socio-economic situation through autonomous economic management was introduced into the minds of the population of the republics.

Much attention was paid to justifying the idea of the annexation by the Soviet Union, and before it by Russia, of those states and territories whose historical heirs the Soviet republics proclaimed themselves heirs to. According to this logic, the USSR and the Russians were and remain occupiers, the stay of the republics in the Soviet Union is illegal, the restoration of historical justice requires the restoration of state independence. One of the main historical ideology memes was to transfer the vices and crimes of Stalinism" to the Russian people. By the time of the dissolution of the USSR, the historical image of Russia as an aggressor country of all times and under all leaders in the Soviet Union was demonized to unthinkable proportions.

The growing Russophobia in the republics caused a backlash in the RSFSR. An "explosion" took place at the September (1989) plenum of the Central Committee, when for the first time the union leadership was "charged" with the plight of Russia. It was stated that Russia, the country's largest republic, was under financial price and economic discrimination. Meanwhile, Gorbachev and his entourage proved unable to offer any reasonable option for resolving the long-standing historical contradiction between the Soviet and Russian power structures. While encouraging supernationalist "excesses" in other republics, Gorbachev insisted on the

"intercessional specificity" of Russians, "established historically.

Events around the Baltics developed differently. Here, the national movements were initially driven by the idea of independence from the USSR. In mid-1988, these republics demanded to "bring clarity" to the events of 1939 and 1940 related to their annexation to the USSR. At the same time, the term "republican sovereignty" was introduced and interpreted broadly.

In the document of the Sąjūdis (Lithuanian Popular Front during perestroika) it was written that "the sovereignty of the Lithuanian SSR should include the management of all economic sectors, including the economy, politics, budgeting, financial, credit, tax and customs policies". In the autumn-winter 1988, the Baltic States passed important legislative acts that reflected this development: local languages were given the status of state languages, and the Estonian National Assembly passed the "Declaration on Sovereignty" and constitutional amendments that in "certain cases" allowed to suspend or set limits on the application of the union laws. Later, Lithuania and Latvia passed similar acts.

In December 1989 at the 2nd Congress of People's Deputies of the Soviet Union, the Baltics managed to achieve a condemnation of the Soviet-German treaty of 1939. The XX Congress of the Lithuanian Communist Party (December 19-20, I (No.) declared it independent from the CPSU. Thus the channels of Moscow's political influence on the region were rapidly narrowing.

On 11 March 1990 the Lithuanian Supreme Council

adopted the Act "On the Restoration of the Independent State of Lithuania". The Lithuanian SSR was renamed the Republic of Lithuania, abolishing on its territory the Constitutions of the Lithuanian SSR and the USSR. In their place was the Provisional Fundamental Law of the Republic of Lithuania based on the Constitution of 1938. On March 30 and May 4 similar acts were passed by Estonia and Latvia, respectively.

Thus, by the middle of 1990 the Baltic "independents" had passed a considerable part of the way to "freedom". The further fate of the "reconstituted countries" depended on the position of the Soviet leadership, as well as the situation in other republics, primarily Russia.

The Law on the State Enterprise

Evolution of ideas about the ways of economic transformation. The concept of economic reform by Gorbachev and his "team" was formulated at the June (1987) plenum of the CPSU Central Committee. Preparations for it were difficult. Gorbachev recalled that it was only in March 1987 that new approaches began to be felt.

On June 30, 1987, the law "On the State Enterprise (Association)" was passed, followed by numerous bylaws in further development of this law.

As a result, the following changes take place:

- The abandonment of target planning residuals. Instead of targets, enterprises are given advisory control figures;

- The election of the director at the enterprise by the labor collective. The enterprise elected not only the director, but down to the foreman;
- The enterprise is defined as the main part of the economy, working for profit and on self-financing;
- the state influences the enterprise through the state order for certain types of products, limits on capital investments and material resources, on the norms of profit and income distribution.

On July 17, 1987, a Resolution was adopted stating that starting from the thirteenth five-year plan, the established practice of developing and approving state annual plans for economic and social development as an independent form of planning would be abandoned. The system of target-oriented planning finally ceased to exist.

Since April 1, 1989, the rights to foreign economic activities for the sale of its products and the purchase of goods for their own needs are granted to the enterprise.

A fundamental rejection of a single organized economic system, target-oriented planning is legally enshrined, the remains of the planning system are eliminated.

The election of managers makes them hostage to unreasonable demands of employees, undermines the possibility of strengthening elementary discipline.

These were the main result of the Law "On the State Enterprise (Association)" and the "package" of 11 joint resolutions of the Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers concretizing it (on the Council of

Ministers, on the Gosplan, on the State Planning Committee, on the Finance Ministry, on the republican bodies of management, on the pricing reform, and on the improvement of the banking system). The correlation of the rights of the ministries and enterprises, the union and the republican bodies of power was also altered.

Instead of the usual plan, a "state order" was introduced, which covered only a portion of production, the rest of which enterprises were allowed to sell at their own discretion. The enterprises themselves envisaged the election of managers, as well as the councils of labor collectives, which also had to mobilize the motivation, responsibility and commitment of workers. The same goal was pursued by expanding the rights of enterprises in determining wages and choosing the range of products. Article 23 of the law, which allowed for the possibility of terminating the operation of an unprofitable enterprise, was very "marketable".

The Law on the State Enterprise summarized all the "best" that existed in the economic practice of that time and was tested as an experiment. At the same time, it became the peak of the preceding stage of economic free-thinking, giving enterprises the freedom they had never seen before and introducing real elements of market regulation of economic relations. Nevertheless, the first results of the law were far from what had been expected.

In 1988, the state order averaged 85%, but enterprises demanded its increase because the lack of experience, as well as the market infrastructure (exchanges, intermediary offices, etc.) made it difficult to sell the

manufactured products.

Distributions between enterprises took the form of mainly barter relationships, and were consequently a step backward not only toward the projected market, but also in comparison with the real socialist economy. The election of directors often resulted in the promotion of professionals who were not the best, and populism became even more pronounced. Many enterprises took advantage of the opportunity to raise workers' wages while at the same time raising the prices of their products and cutting production to a cheap assortment. Workers' councils did not always raise the level of management, duplicating the functions of both the unions and the administration. Article 23 of the law (on possible bankruptcy) was "stuck": in 1988, more than 30% of enterprises were unprofitable, and another 25 made a small profit; if they switched to self-financing and lost state support, they risked going bankrupt, causing explosions of unemployment. Neither society nor the state was prepared for such a turn of events.

Cooperative policy was equally ambiguous. In 1987-1988, a number of acts encouraging private initiative were adopted. The most important of them was the Law "On Cooperation in the USSR" (May 1988). Through the rapid growth of the cooperative movement, the state tried to improve the situation in the social sphere: the unsatisfied demand for consumer goods was more than 30 billion rubles, and in the sphere of services provided by state enterprises - about 15 billion rubles. However, the more actively the cooperative movement developed, the warier it became. The incentives allowed cooperators to buy raw materials at low state prices and

sell products at high, commercial prices. With comparable labor intensity, wages in cooperatives were incomparably higher than in the public sector. The imperfection of the control system led to the fact that the heads of many enterprises created cooperatives under them. The ability to utilize state facilities and resources, coupled with the advantages and benefits of the cooperatives, had a particularly significant effect.

Such cooperatives were blatantly parasitic on the state economy. The law on cooperation contributed to the legalization of shady business, created conditions for "laundering" criminal money, increasing social disparities, and the emergence of racketeers. In 1988, 600 cases of racketeering were recorded, but only in 137 of them the victims sought help from law enforcement agencies.

Reforming the country's economy in 1987-1988 was not limited to the adoption of laws on state-owned enterprises and cooperation. Joint ventures were created; the rights of state-owned enterprises and cooperatives in foreign economic activities were expanded; commercialization of branch banks began: in August 1988, the first cooperative bank was registered. In the discussion of agrarian problems, the idea of leasing was promoted; it was permitted to begin issuing shares by enterprises and organizations; the question of the possible conversion was considered. It was mainly in these spheres that the socially active population, most interested in the radicalization of the economic reform, was concentrated.

Nevertheless, the implementation of the law on state

enterprise, the attempt to use the "cooperative" resource were the most significant directions of the economic course of 1987-1988. But none of them solved the original problems. Moreover, superimposed on the pro-inflationary measures of the previous stage, these two policy elements considerably aggravated the situation both in the production sphere and on the consumer market. Since the beginning of 1988 there had been an upsurge in demand, and by the autumn the prospect of a collapse of the consumer market as a result of financial imbalances had become a reality.

One of the main reasons for the economic failures in the USSR in late 1988 was the underestimation of the role of financial levers in regulating the economy, which was characteristic of the thinking of the higher party-economic elite in 1985-1988. According to experts, price and monetary reforms should have been if not preceded, then at least accompanied, not lagging behind other "pro-market" transformations. In the USSR, the situation developed differently. The fundamental decision on the pricing reform adopted at the June (1987) Central Committee Plenum was to be implemented from January 1, 1988. During the entire second half of the year 1987, the State Committee for Prices was "chasing" the preparation of the reform and its parameters were determined by the established date. However, the reform had to be postponed. This was done due to the existence of a number of stereotypes, the powerful pressure of which was experienced both by ordinary citizens and the country's leadership.

The famous economist E. F. Saburov wrote directly about "destructive fear" as a motive for inaction. This can

explain the fact that, while accepting the arguments in favor of changing the price system and repeatedly approving the proposed measures, including at Politburo meetings, the most important market reform was never launched, neither in 1988, nor later. It was only under the influence of the crisis in 1989 that it came into the spotlight. It immediately found itself in the center of political struggles and became the subject of populist speculation. While calling for market reforms, the Gorbachev leadership itself delayed their start. As a result, the crisis situation in the socio-economic sphere was becoming increasingly unmanageable, narrowing the opportunities for a relatively smooth transition to market relations and creating a breeding ground for political and economic radicalism.

In 1989 the negative trends in the development of the economy became irreversible. This forced the country's leadership to look for new recipes of solutions to economic problems. In 1988-1989, Academician L. I. Abalkin, Director of the Institute of Economics of the USSR Academy of Sciences, became widely known for his critical and constructive speeches. In July 1989, he headed the State Commission on Economic Reform under the USSR Government with the rank of Deputy Prime Minister. The commission was supposed to develop a scenario of reforms that would ensure a smooth and regulated transition of the Soviet planned economy to a market economy.

However, almost immediately after its creation, the commission aroused a cautious and critical attitude. Its head was often associated with the indecisive Prime Minister N.I. Ryzhkov and the sad results of the

economy in 1985-1989. Economic scientists outside of the government were becoming increasingly vocal about the need for an accelerated movement toward the market and radical reforms of the Soviet economy. Gorbachev also began to lean toward them, as reflected in his invitation in December 1989.

The academician N.Ya. Petrakov, known for his consistently market-oriented views, was invited by Gorbachev as an economic advisor. However, the new complex plans for the country's transition to the market economy did not take shape until the spring of 1990. In the summer of 1990, they were offered in the form of the widely publicized programs.

All decisions made generated economic chaos

In 1990, the failure to develop an annual plan for national economic development in 1991, replacing the fall of the growth rate of the economy itself. And the economic chaos is exacerbated by political chaos. In December 1990, Gorbachev proposed a draft renewed Union Treaty, by the summer of 1991 developed a new format of state structure in the form of a de facto decentralized confederation, designed to at least maintain the appearance of unity of the country.

The events of August 1991 thwarted the signing of the document. The point in the final destruction is set. It is interesting that at that time the Russian leadership was already being offered help by foreign economists.

Nobel laureates James Tobin, Lawrence Klein and Vasily Leontief appealed to the leadership of the country with the following - "The government must play a much more important role in the transition to a market economy. The policy of non-interference of the state, which is a part of "shock therapy", has not justified itself. The government should replace "shock therapy" with a program in which the state takes the main role in the economy, as it happens in modern mixed economies of the United States, Sweden, Germany.

A group of American economists, including Nobel laureates Franco Modigliani and Robert Solow, also addressed an open letter to the authorities in Russia. The economists strongly recommend and suggest that the authorities keep natural resources in public ownership.

Another Nobel laureate in economics, Joseph Stiglitz, rebukes the Russian authorities for a very radical approach to market reforms.

Alas, the voices of prominent foreign economists, as well as those of many domestic economists, were not heard by the new authorities...

The "new political thinking" in action. In 1987-1990.

In 1987-1990, which were the beginning of implementation of the principles of "new thinking", there were events that caused great changes in world politics with ambiguous consequences for our country.

The Soviet-American dialogue was actively developing. One of its important results was the conclusion on

December 8, 1987, of the treaty on the elimination of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles (INF Treaty). According to this treaty, 1,752 Soviet and 869 U.S. missiles were to be eliminated, that is, the reduction was asymmetrical. In addition, the Soviets eliminated the Oka short-range missiles, which were interfering in Siberia and the Far East and were not mentioned in the treaty at all.

The INF Treaty for the first time recorded the Soviet Union's agreement to monitor compliance with its terms not only by national means (spy satellites), but also through on-site inspections (at missile bases and destruction sites). All this reflected the Soviet leadership's new overall approach to the disarmament problem. As Gorbachev wrote, "it was necessary to move from petty military accounting to broad political approaches.

According to these approaches, in 1986-1988, the Soviet Union repeatedly took large-scale initiatives to reduce both nuclear and exchange weapons. In January 1986, Gorbachev issued a statement proposing that the nuclear-weapon states achieve their phased elimination by 2000. The Soviet leader informed the United Nations in December 1988 of the Soviet government's decision to reduce the size of its Armed Forces by 500,000 men in the next two years.

There it was announced the intention to withdraw by 1991 from the GDR, Czechoslovakia and the PDR six tank divisions, reduce in the European territory of the USSR and in the states-allies on OVD 10 thousand tanks, 8.5 thousand artillery systems, 800 combat

aircraft.

In 1985-1991 the USSR sequentially pursued a policy of winding down of its military divisions. The USSR was consistently pursuing a policy of reducing its involvement in armed conflicts in the "Third World". The Soviet leadership decided in principle to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan as early as in 1985. In 1987-1988 complicated negotiations between the USSR, USA, Pakistan and Afghanistan on the cessation of military operations and the subsequent organization of the country were held in Geneva. The withdrawal of Soviet troops started on May 15, 1988 and was completed on February 15, 1989. The end of the war in Afghanistan contributed to the improvement of relations with China. At the same time, the Soviet Union withdrew from participation in other regional conflicts (Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, Nicaragua) and sharply reduced its economic aid to friendly countries.

In 1988 Gorbachev developed the concept of "freedom of choice" as a universal principle of international relations. In 1989 this position was reinforced by the beginning of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from territories previously considered as a zone of Soviet influence, in particular - from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. This led to rapid developments in the states of the "socialist commonwealth. Experts note that, for the first time in the post-war period, the Soviet Union did not pay attention to the processes taking place inside these countries. As a result, by the end of 1989, "velvet" anticommunist revolutions had taken place everywhere in Eastern Europe (except in Romania). In just one night, the continent witnessed striking changes. In the West, it

was first of all appreciated that in the USSR there was not even any discussion of the "international assistance to fraternal parties and peoples" in the spirit of the "Brezhnev Doctrine". New political systems were being formed in all Eastern European states. They ruled out "the communist party's leading role", asserted political pluralism and multi-partyism, suggested radical market reforms, and actively reoriented foreign policy toward the West.

The avalanche-like development of events in Eastern Europe sharply pushed up the beginning of German unification. In November 1989, the symbol of the Cold War, the Penal Wall separating West and East Berlin, was destroyed in the course of demonstrations. Moscow* reacted quite calmly to this event. Recognition of the inability to unite Germany presupposed the solution of the Comp-ifkca problems to ensure the security of the USSR (the inviolability of borders in Europe, membership of a united Germany in NATO). All these issues were discussed in the negotiations according to the "2+4" formula, in which the FRG and GDR, as well as the USSR, the United States, Britain and France took part. However, plans for gradual unification were finally abandoned in the spring of 1991, after the Alliance for Germany, a coalition of parties calling for immediate unification with the FRG, won the elections in the GDR.

There is no consensus in modern literature as to the reasons for Gorbachev's passivity and excessive concessionality in dealing with the issue of German unification. In February 1990, the Soviet leader gave the FRG chancellor the opportunity to "take the process of

German unification into his own hands." Initially, the stumbling block was the question of the united Germany's membership in NATO. However, as the well-known Soviet diplomat A.F. Dobrynin writes, "to the considerable surprise of the West, and the majority of our diplomats, during the 'blitz meeting' with Kohl in July 1990 in one of the resort areas of the Caucasus, Gorbachev virtually removed all important objections and reservations regarding German unification. The most important question of Soviet security within the framework of the new security system in Europe was not even the subject of any serious consideration, much less a decision. Kohl, in his own words, was astonished by this sudden complete agreement of Gorbachev. Among the insufficiently resolved issues was the question of the amount of German participation in financing the costs associated with the withdrawal of almost half a million Western Group troops from the GDR. The sum proposed by Germany was clearly underestimated. The haste and compliance on the part of the Soviets resulted in the families returning home, being forced to live in tents and accept the lack of schools and clinics.

On October 3, 1990, the GDR ceased to exist, joining the FRG. On November 10, during Gorbachev's visit to the unified state, the Soviet-German Treaty of Good Neighborhood, Partnership and Cooperation was signed, consolidating the changes that had taken place in the Soviet leadership's attitude to the events that took place in Europe in 1989.

In the West's eyes, it became a unique test of the USSR's commitment to the principles of "new political thinking". The results of the year were summed up in

December at the meeting in Malta between Gorbachev and the new U.S. President George Bush. It also defined the prospects for active cooperation between the two countries on a wide range of international problems, which was refuted by qualitatively new historical conditions. It was not by chance that Gorbachev called the meeting in Malta the beginning of the end of the Cold War.

§ 3. The "Sovereignty Parade" and the Fate of Reform.

Mid-1990 to mid-1991.

Beginning of the independent policy of the RSFSR

The beginning of the movement for Russian sovereignty coincided with the entry of the USSR into a crisis phase of development. Since 1990, the previously identified negative trends began to have a collapsing nature, leading to the destruction of the entire state organism. The crisis in the economy continued to deepen. Practically all the parameters of the economic development had negative dynamics (gross domestic product, capital investments, etc.). Inflation was growing at unprecedented rates. The standard of living of the population significantly decreased. In the words of A.A. Sobchak, the country was facing a "frightening economic abyss".

In the winter and spring of 1990, the movement for

Russian sovereignty, which had become a major factor of Union significance, was unfolding. Various organizations felt it necessary to clarify the place and authority of the RSFSR (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic), within the Soviet Union and to form republican organs of power and public organizations in full accord with the analogy of the other republics. It was proposed to delegate only part of the power authority to the central government, to establish new forms of relations with the national regions on a democratic basis.

Significantly, this pressure from below could no longer be ignored by the Russian official structures that were usually loyal to Gorbachev. Thus, on March 26, 1990, the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR discussed the draft Concept of Economic Independence of the Republic. The Council of Ministers of the RSFSR expressed confidence that its implementation would promote consolidation of all union republics into a single economic complex.

The unity in striving for sovereignty was combined with fundamental differences in the views on the prospects of the RSFSR's development. Under the system established by 1985, hopes for solving many problems were associated with the creation of a republican Communist Party within the CPSU. Many people still regarded the party as the main link in the system of state administration. Therefore, the movement to create the Russian Communist Party received fairly broad support.

At the same time, the first half of 1990 saw intensive structuring of the "anticommunist alternative" in Russian politics. During this period, new parties were created:

Social Democratic, Democratic, Socialist, Constitutional Democratic, Christian Democratic and Republican parties emerged. Most of them united under the Democratic Russia movement. The basis for consolidation was not only anti-communism, but also the rejection of the socialist principle in any of its forms. The leadership of "Demrossia" turned out to be radical, pragmatic-minded politicians. In order to achieve their goals, they set the goal of mastering the republican level of government, which determined their active participation in the campaign for the elections of *People's Deputies of Russia* in the winter-spring of 1990.

In this tumultuous campaign, populism was actively exploited; promises to raise wages and increase pensions; to provide housing and good medical care; to fill stores with food and protect against rampaging criminals; to clean up water and air pollution; to reconcile warring nations and give everyone long overdue freedom, promises which were generously handed out. The "trademark" of the campaign was the fight against the unwarranted privileges of the party and Soviet nomenklatura, which insulted the sense of social justice of the masses. The campaign's promises of quick and painless solutions to the accumulated problems contrasted with the print warnings of "democratic" authors about the inevitability of serious difficulties for the population in carrying out market reforms.

The campaign demonstrated the disunity of leftist forces in its implementation and a high degree of organization of "democratic movements". The organizations and associations of patriotic orientation that clustered around the bloc Public-Patriotic Movements of Russia did not

become a serious force. At that point, the radicals succeeded in consolidating a large part of the protest electorate, which included both statist patriots and representatives of various socialist and communist movements. The slogans of democracy as the antithesis of un-freedom and totalitarianism enjoyed wide popularity.

Formally, the discussions of the second half of 1990 and the first half of 1991 revolved around issues related to different interpretations of the concept of (Russian) "sovereignty" and the future national-state structure of the renewed Union. In fact, divergences between Soviet and Russian politicians were related to the problem of socialist choice and radical changes in the existing socio-economic and socio-political system. While Gorbachev continued to assert that the goal of the reforms was to renew socialism, Yeltsin and his entourage more and more clearly declared the liberal-democratic character of the future reforms.

The June 12, 1990 adoption of the Declaration of Russian Sovereignty by the 1st Congress of People's Deputies of the RSFSR and the election of new leaders prepared to defend that sovereignty created a unique situation in the history of the USSR: for the first time, an alternative center for decision making appeared, and *Russian power emerged from the shadow of the Soviet one*. However, while the proclamation of sovereignty was relatively easy, the radicals had insufficient material and power in their hands to carry out reforms in the RSFSR according to the scenario.

In 1990-1991, the vast majority of Russia's economic

facilities were still subordinated to the Union agencies. Only 17% of the enterprises located on its territory were directly subordinated to the Republic (in the other Union republics, this share ranged from 25 to 60% not controlled by the CPSU). The all-union authorities also controlled all the power structures. This predetermined the policy of the Russian leaders: its content became a struggle for appropriation of material, financial and other resources located on the territory of the republic. In terms of form, it was a tough fight "across the board" against the Soviet power structures and the policies they pursued.

The struggle for power has its own logic. One of the first places in it is to undermine the positions of the political opponent. Gorbachev's opponents initially had a certain "head start": they could sharply criticize the USSR President for his mistakes and inaction and promise a quick solution to the problems that concerned society. The people's realization that the Russian authorities currently have no opportunity to fulfill their promises pushed aside the issue of potential responsibility for their obviously utopian recipes for solving the pressing problems. The "counter-fire" tactic, in which any, even sensible initiative by the Center, was "beaten" by broader declarations, was confrontational in nature. In the second half of the 1990s, 'bicentricity' was gradually transforming into 'dual power'. A. N. Yakovlev believes that Gorbachev lost power by December, only formally retaining its trappings.

From the middle of 1990 Russia began to pursue an independent policy. The implementation of the principles of its sovereignty was seen as the basis for overcoming

the crisis. Legally, this policy was based on Article 5 of the Declaration of Sovereignty, which proclaimed the supremacy of the republican Constitution and laws over the union ones. These ideas were developed in a number of other documents.

On October 24, 1990 was published the law that gave the Russian bodies the right to suspend the union acts if they violated the sovereignty of the RSFSR. It also stipulated that the decisions of the supreme bodies of state power of the USSR, decrees and other acts of the President of the USSR would come into force only after their ratification by the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. Corresponding changes and additions were made to the Russian Constitution in December 1990. There was even established a fine from 500 to 10 thousand rubles for willful non-compliance with the laws of the RSFSR.

The specific Russian policy was expressed in the adoption of a series of clauses that developed the provision of one of the first new Russian laws, the Law on Property in the Territory of the RSFSR of July 4, 1990. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics could receive these funds "for use on the basis of the laws of the RSFSR and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR of August 9, 1990 declared invalid earlier foreign economic agreements and transactions on sale of precious metals and other strategic resources and goods concluded without the RSFSR's approval. It was also stated that the RSFSR is not responsible for loans, agreements and transactions concluded without the consent of its relevant authorities. It was planned to

introduce a special regime for trade transactions with goods produced in the republic.

The decision of August 28, 1990, instructed the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR to conclude trade and economic agreements with the governments of the main countries-importers of Russian goods. At the same time, the USSR Government was forbidden to "re-export" items produced in the republic or raw materials extracted without the Russian government's knowledge. To implement this task, it was supposed to create the *RSFSR Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the RSFSR Main Customs Administration, the Main Tourism Administration, the Academy of Foreign Trade, and the RSFSR Commodity Exchange. Wholesale and intermediary firms of the Gosstab of the USSR*, located in the RSFSR, were transferred to the State Committee of the RSFSR on the material and technical support of national and regional programs.

The reform of the Russian financial system pursued the same goals. *The institutions of the USSR Gosbank, USSR Promstroybank, USSR Agroprombank, USSR Zhilsotsbank, USSR Savings Bank, and USSR Vneshekonombank were declared the property of Russia.* The Russian Republican Bank of the USSR was transformed into the State Bank of the RSFSR. A number of laws and regulations specified Russia's banking policy, regulating the status and relationships of the entities operating there.

Changes in the banking system were closely related to fundamental innovations in the approach to the formation of the Union budget. The Russian legislators

intended to deprive the USSR budget of its own sources of tax revenues - now all the taxes collected were to go to the republican budget; Russia transferred to the Soviet Union "targeted financial resources" in the amount approved by the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. New tasks were also set for the republic's courts. According to the Decree of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR of October 18, 1990, the State Arbitration Court of the RSFSR and its territorial organizations were obliged to apply the principle of the primacy of the legislation of the republic, decisions of its Supreme Soviet and congresses of people's deputies in resolving disputes. The Constitutional Court of the RSFSR, which was being created, was called upon to protect republican interests.

Other state structures, parallel to the union ones, were gradually formed. The organization of the Ministry of the Press and Information was supposed to accelerate the creation of the "fourth estate", without which "democracy cannot be made irreversible". In the confrontation Russian television was being born. A struggle broke out for the republic to acquire its own newspapers, division of the party's printing base. The events of January 1991 in the Baltics were used as an excuse to raise the question about the necessity for Russia to have its own army. Soon it was decided to create the Committee on Defense and Security, and in May - its own KGB. In January of that year, the Federation Council of the RSFSR was established, and the preparation of the Federation Treaty for Russia began. The procedure for introducing the state of emergency and holding the referendum on the territory of the republic was determined. At the state level, the idea of deprivation of

official institutions began to be introduced.

Using the achievements of their predecessors, the Russian authorities have demonstrated a conscious and vigorous pro-market policy. The law "On Property in the RSFSR" legalized the diversity of its forms. It stipulated that property could be privately owned, state and municipal property, as well as the property of public associations. The subsequent Law "On Enterprises and Entrepreneurial Activity" was to stimulate the activity of enterprises belonging to different forms of ownership. The program of privatization of state and municipal enterprises in the RSFSR was developed and legally formalized. The relevant State Committee was to create a competitive environment and restrict monopolistic activities on commodity markets. The law on housing privatization was adopted. Investment activities were stimulated and regulated, the prerequisites for attracting foreign capital were created.

The Russian authorities encouraged the creation of free economic zones: by mid-1991 this status was granted to nine territories. Non-legal entities and individuals were granted the right to participate in foreign economic activities and gain direct access to foreign markets.

Russian legislators paid much attention to the agrarian problems. They envisaged debt forgiveness for collective and state farms; priority financing of the production and social spheres of the village; and attempts to start an agrarian reform by encouraging all forms of farming. This meant the use, along with administrative and market methods of management.

Decisions that were radically different from Gorbachev's were also put forward with regard to the draft of the new Union Treaty. Instead of a gradual transformation of the bureaucratic state into a new (as Gorbachev said, "real") federation "from above", the radicals suggested actually destroying it and building a new federation "from below". The transition to the new strategy was carried out in the second half of 1990-early 1991. The Russian side sharply criticized all the drafts of the treaty, which came from the union structures. At the same time, in October 1990, Russia signed direct bilateral treaties with Ukraine and Kazakhstan. The idea of the "Union of Four" was put forward: Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan. The signed documents stated the readiness to build interstate relations based on the recognition of mutual sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, and the inviolability of existing borders.

Similar, blatantly anti-Soviet treaties were signed by Russia with Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia in January 1991. In the same month, the first deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, R. I. Khasbulatov, signed a draft of the Union's transformation. It defined the proposed Community as "a confederal association of states that are sovereign from an international legal point of view. The absolute priority of the laws of these States over the laws of the Community was proclaimed, which was assumed to be without its own property and constitution, while the solution of the issue of common citizenship was postponed to a later date. Only defense, security and nuclear power were given to the Community "direct management".

In 1990-1991, the autonomous republics became the

object of a struggle for influence between the Center of the Union and Russia. An important step to stimulate autonomy was made at the end of April 1990. The Law of the USSR on the Division of Powers between the Soviet Union and the Subjects of the Federation was passed. Its content indicated that it extended the Union's legal personality to the autonomous republics within the Union: this meant that the reforming of the Union would have taken place at the expense of the disintegration of the Union republics. The law treated the autonomous republics as Soviet socialist states, subjects of the Federation (USSR). They were given the right to transfer powers to the Union SSR, bypassing "their" union republic. The autonomous republics were supposed to base their relations with the union republics, of which they were a part of, on treaties and agreements.

After the Russian Declaration of Sovereignty, the struggle for autonomies took place under the slogan: "Who will give more?" - and whetted the appetites of local national elites. The union authorities supposed that the autonomies would take part in the general negotiation process, while the Russian authorities did not impose such conditions. "Russia will conclude a treaty with the Tatar Republic or a state - that's what the Supreme Soviet will decide. There will be a confederative treaty within Russia. You don't have to think about how many rights Russia will give you. You should think about how much you can take, and what share of power you can delegate to Russia. Take as much independence as you can digest. In the summer of 1990 Boris Yeltsin formulated the position of the RSFSR leadership in Tatarstan.

The new "subjects of the Union" immediately began to follow the example of their "big brothers": before the winter of 1990, 14 of the 16 Russian autonomous republics declared sovereignty, while the remaining two and some of the autonomous regions adopted declarations that unilaterally raised their political status. Six months later, all the autonomous oblasts (except the Jewish oblast) had already declared sovereignty as republics. The words "autonomous", "Soviet", "socialist" disappeared from the names "Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic". The declarations of the former autonomies repeated the contents of their union counterparts: they contained demands for the supremacy of republican legislation over Russian legislation, as well as the ownership of the republic over the resources on its territory. The struggle for autonomy between the Soviet and Russian authorities lasted until August 1991.

Foreign Policy

In the sphere of foreign policy, the development of the concept of Russian national-state interests began. As the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR L. V. Kozyrev, "the thrust of this concept was set by the policy documents of Democratic Russia, and the ideas of a number of publicists and public figures who sought to develop an alternative to the Union's foreign policy course. "

The relations between the new Russian structures and the allied powers were acutely confrontational. The Russian parliament rejected the Union's program of

transition to the market, leaving no hope for compromise. Russian authorities constantly demanded the resignation of N. I. Ryzhkov's government. They sharply condemned the decision of the Union parliament to change the system of presidential power in the USSR in order to strengthen it (the so-called "Gorbachev's 8 points," November 1991). The Russian side did not go along with the pre-agreed reform of the pricing system. The Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR opposed the sending of Russian citizens outside the republic to resolve interethnic conflicts, as well as the involvement of troops in political conflicts.

The lack of coherence in the actions of the Union and Russian centers had a huge impact on the situation in the country as a whole, leading to consequences that in 1990 hardly anyone could have predicted. Difficulties in the transition of the krynka (Poland and Ukraine). The beginning of the confrontation between Russian and Soviet structures was in the period when the Soviet economic and administrative elite, with a significant influence of the scientific economic community, formed an idea of the system of measures to be implemented for the transition to market relations. The intention to carry out decisive, albeit obviously painful, transformations was significantly stimulated by the growing economic chaos in the USSR.

In the middle of 1990, N.I. Ryzhkov's entourage developed two variants of the transition to the market economy. The first ("Basic Trends") was associated with the academician L.I. Abalkin who was responsible for the preparation of the economic reform in the rank of the Vice-Premier of the Soviet government.

The authors of the second ("500 Days") were Academician S.S. Shatalin and G.A. Yavlinsky. The latter had been working in the "Abalki" commission for a long time, so it is no coincidence that experts have noted the similarity of the basic provisions of both programs. They included privatization of state property, support of small and medium-sized enterprises and creation of a competitive environment; restoration of the commodity-money balance, a gradual reform of pricing, indexation of money incomes and social protection of people below the poverty line; reorganization of the employment service due to the inevitable appearance of unemployment.

The differences in the programs concerned two points. The "500 days" program assumed the reform with the conclusion of only an economic union between the republics, pushing back the political treaty for a long time. The main subjects of state regulation were considered "sovereign states": The supremacy of their legislation was assumed. Considering the mood of impatience and reflecting it, the authors believed it possible to move to a market in 500 days. Proponents of the Abalkin approach expected it to take 6-8 years. Characteristically, the program was published in the newspaper "Democratic Russia" under the heading "Russia cannot wait". It was the "philosophy of action" contained in the "500 Days" plan that predetermined that it was adopted by the RSFSR leadership as the Russian program of economic reforms. The differences that the Union program and the "500 Days" program had between them came to be treated as insurmountable. The Russian plan's propaganda was laced with a heavy

dose of populism. In addition to the revolutionary pace, the transition to the market was promised to be carried out without harming the population.

In the autumn of 1990, the contradiction between the need for an active economic policy and the unpreparedness of the state and political structures to do so became fully apparent. The crisis in the national economy demanded urgent measures, but there was no unanimity in Moscow as to what they should be. The Russian parliament approved the "500 days" program, the USSR Supreme Soviet adopted its own plan of market reforms ("Guidelines"). As a result, not only were there no coordinated actions, but the relationship between the union and republican authorities became acutely confrontational, blocking any reform initiatives. Union Prime Minister N.I. Ryzhkov was mercilessly criticized for the failures in the economy of the previous years, too cautious in choosing measures of transformation, unpreparedness and even unwillingness to switch to the market. A sudden illness (a heart attack at the end of December 1990) put a final end to the question of his resignation. He was replaced as Prime Minister on January 11, 1991. V. S. Pavlov (Minister of Finance of the former government), who had tried to remain politically neutral in 1989-1990, was appointed.

The Pavlov government began its work under difficult conditions. It was faced with a recessionary economy, a severe budget deficit. These difficulties were exacerbated by the fact that the sovereign republics began to implement a system of one-payment of taxes to the budget. On the eve of 1991, the Russian leadership decided to reduce payments to the Union by 100 billion

rubles. The Soviet economy was negatively affected by the transition to world prices and settlements in a freely convertible currency with the former socialist countries. The government's hands were tied by the increasing political confrontation between the union and republican authorities. As a result, it was not possible to implement timely and comprehensive unpopular, but necessary measures, which, on the one hand, reduced their effectiveness, and, on the other hand, again put the government under fire of harsh criticism.

The economic malaise was particularly painful in the social sphere. In 1991, basic products per capita in general were the same or slightly less than in 1985, although even then this level was recognized as insufficient. Production of food products was declining. There was less production of sugar, meat, sausages, processed meat, animal oil and whole milk products. Continued growth in the volume of money supply led to higher prices for almost all consumer goods, which did not become more affordable. And their scarcity generated a rush demand, reinforcing all sorts of shortages: "for the reserve" was bought up what had a relatively long shelf life. In March 1991, the Goskomstat stated that the share of rationed retail sales of major products accounted for 70 to 100% of all resources. Due to the shortage of goods, the coupon system was cancelled in a number of regions, since the authorities could not provide the population even with the declared meager norms.

Complication of the socio-political situation

The "parade of sovereignties", economic chaos, and interethnic conflicts led to a significant complication of the socio-political situation. Since the spring of 1990, parties of an openly anti-socialist nature have emerged. The fate of the reforms proclaimed in 1985 and the fate of the Soviet Union itself depended to a large extent on the state of the CPSU, the leading element of the Soviet political system. At a time when the ideological and political pluralism initiated "from above" really existed in society, the party formally remained a single "monolithic" organization. The leadership avoided accepting the fact that the party was no longer a union of like-minded people, and inner-party disagreements were often irreconcilable. There was an actual split into a number of factions or "platforms. The "Democratic Platform" advocated social-democratic positions. "The Marxist Platform criticized deviations from Marxism and advocated a return to its classical models. Extreme left-wing forces united in the Communist Initiative movement and the Unity - for Leninism and Communist ideals society.

The crisis of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union did not emerge by chance and is associated with certain ideas about the nature and prospects of the possible evolution of this political institution. In 1985-1991, two approaches to the party, which can be conventionally called "liquidatorial" and "pragmatic", took shape. The first approach was based on the idea that the CPSU was the backbone of the totalitarian system, and therefore, it must be liquidated. Proponents of this view not only did not work on the concept of restructuring the party, but also argued that it was unnecessary. And the restructuring of the rigid hierarchical organization could

only be carried out "from above". This position was shared by Mikhail Gorbachev. His skeptical attitude toward the CPSU increased markedly by the summer of 1990. In response to the advice of his aide A. S. Chernyaev to leave the post of General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Gorbachev said: *"You know, Tolya, you think I don't see how everyone is conspiring, persuading me to give up the Secretary General's post. But understand this: you can't let this lousy mad dog off the leash. If I do that, this whole machine will be totally against me."*

Proponents of a different approach to the CPSU viewed the party not so much as a "totalitarian structure" but as a historically established institution of governance, as a "party of power". They believed that it was the only all-union force holding all social ties in its hands. *Therefore, its rapid removal from power would actually mean not a step toward democracy, but a desertion that would inevitably plunge the country into even greater chaos.* It was believed that the party, having made an internal reorganization, should lead the transformation while maintaining a high degree of controllability of social processes, "without upheaval". All these ideas turned out to be unclaimed and were not even seriously discussed at the top.

The crisis of the party manifested itself in full measure at what became the last XXVIII Congress of the CPSU (July 1990). Many delegates expressed dissatisfaction with the work of the party's top leadership and the general secretary's inner circle. The Congress replaced the party program with the program document "Towards Humane Democratic Socialism", which contained rather

general declarations. Organizational basis of the CPSU also underwent fundamental changes. The Congress enshrined "the right of individual Communists and groups to express their views in platforms", i.e., it revived factionalism. In addition, the Congress established virtually unlimited "independence of the Communist Party of the Union Republics". Instead of a single centralized organization, the CPSU became a "union" of republican Communist Parties, which was a blow to the state unity of the USSR.

In the autumn of 1990, there was widespread radicalization of social and political sentiments. This was largely due to the deterioration of food supplies and shortage of a wide variety of goods. In August, a wave of "tobacco" riots broke out across the country - in Moscow alone there were over 100 riots. Despite the fact that in the summer of 1990 a record harvest of grain (220 million tons), in September the bread crisis broke out. The simultaneous shutdown of tobacco factories and bakeries for repairs left many perplexed. Suspicions of a "man-made" character of the difficulties were fueled by information about huge stocks of goods in various kinds of "hoarders". Some politicians attributed this to flaws in the system, while others saw even deliberate sabotage.

One way or another, both supporters of preserving socialism and those who wanted to leave it, began to talk about the need to "bring order" and introduce tough, emergency measures to overcome the crisis, while both sides accused each other of striving for dictatorship.

Thus, on September 16, the day of the democratic rally at Manezhnaya Square in support of the "500 Days"

program, the movement of troops near Moscow was spotted, which gave grounds to accuse the authorities of preparing a forceful action. In the same month a document entitled "Action Program-90" prepared by one of the organizations belonging to "Democratic Russia" gained notable popularity. The text contained calls for the creation of *civil action committees*, aimed at destabilizing society and destroying social and political structures through mass actions; demonstrations, picketing, and strikes. It was also proposed to proceed to "quasi-privatization" - violent seizure of land from collective and state farms with the help of special occupation groups.

On November 7, in the midst of a festive demonstration on Red Square, a member of the Leningrad People's Front shot M. S. Gorbachev twice from a distance of 50 meters. C. Gorbachev. The failed terrorist attack forced the President of the USSR to sharply shift his course to the right. He made proposals to the Supreme Soviet, aimed at strengthening the executive power ("Gorbachev's 8 points"). It was emphasized that it was not about dictatorship, but about restoring order, the development of genuine democratic processes, the restoration of economic control, the suppression of ethnic strife and the fight against crime. At the beginning of January 1991, the form of the presidential rule was approved. The executive-administrative bodies were reorganized, and the Defense Minister and the Interior Minister introduced a joint order for joint patrolling of cities and towns by soldiers and police.

The possibility of strengthening the allied structures was a source of concern for liberal politicians. They believed

that Gorbachev was under the influence of the "reactionaries," by which they meant the "party rats", the top of the military-industrial complex, the generals and officers, the staff of the Soviet agencies, and most of the members of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Reflecting these sentiments, E. A. Shevardnadze at the IV Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR (December 1990) declared that "a dictatorship is coming" and resigned as Minister of Foreign Affairs in protest. At the same congress, G. I. Yanayev (who had previously worked in the Komsomol and trade union structures) became vice-president of the USSR, which was seen as confirmation of the new, conservative trend.

Clashes between civilians and army and Interior Ministry units in Lithuania and Latvia had a huge impact on the escalation of confrontation between the Russian and Allied powers. In Vilnius, at night of January 12 to 13, 1991. Blood was shed during an attempt to seize the TV center. The opposing sides, like many Soviet citizens, had different definitions of the reasons for this. Tensions rose over the lack of an intelligible explanation from the Soviet leadership, which some saw as proof of its complicity in the conflict. Russian liberals reacted painfully, fearing a repeat of the "Vilnius scenario" in similar situations.

Criticism of Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet government, and the military intensified. On February 19, 1991, speaking on television, Boris Yeltsin demanded the resignation of the President of the USSR, and on March 9 called on his supporters "to declare war on the leadership of the country".

Dissatisfaction with the Situation

The counter productivity of the policy pursued by the leadership of the RSFSR became evident to many - so striking was the discrepancy between the realities of early 1991 and the expectations of the spring and summer of 1990. Dissatisfaction with this situation manifested itself at the highest levels of power in Russia. On February 21, 1990 at a session of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR six members of its Presidium made a statement condemning the actions of B. N. Yeltsin, and demanded his resignation. The statement was signed by Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Soviet S. P. Goryacheva and B. M. Isayev; Chairmen of the Chambers of the Supreme Soviet R.G. Abdulatipov and V.B. Isakov; Deputy Chairman of the Chamber A.A. Veshnyakov and Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet V. G. Syro-vatko. In the past they were all supporters of Yeltsin. The document stressed the authoritarian nature of the management by the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, "disregard for those bodies, which have been legitimately elected", and the unilateral adoption of many important decisions. It also noted that Yeltsin "pursues a narrow party course, which meets the interests of the bloc of new political forces, but is contrary to the fundamental interests of Russia". Yeltsin was also accused of destroying the USSR, his inability to organize the consolidated and constructive work of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, and his unwillingness to carry out reforms despite his loud calls for them.

The 3rd Extraordinary Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies, which was convened in March 1991 to report to the Russian leadership, could be considered a certain

political turning point. Its fate after that forum could have developed differently. However, the introduction of troops into the capital by the Soviet government on the eve of the opening of the congress only strengthened the "anti-centrist" consolidation of the Russian parliamentary corps, which felt insulted by Gorbachev's ill-conceived action. Yeltsin and his supporters made the most of the chance they were given. Condemning the pressure on the Russian congress, Yeltsin declared that he was in favor of a coalition policy in which everyone, including "progressively minded members of the CPSU," could take part. The possibility of such a coalition was confirmed by Colonel A. Rutskoi's demarche, who announced the creation of the "Communists for Democracy" faction and its readiness to support Yeltsin. It split the Communists.

Pressure on the congress "from below" was also exerted by the miners, with whom the radical leaders were working in "close contact" in the spring of 1991. In a series of resolutions, the miners demanded Gorbachev's resignation and unconditionally supported the Russian radicals. Given the general sentiment, Yeltsin advocated the speedy signing of the Treaty on the Union of Sovereign States as a "federative voluntary and equal association." As a result, not only was he not removed from power, but on the contrary, at the Third Congress he received additional powers, and the Fourth Congress (May 1991) decided on a short presidential election, which increased his chances of victory.

B.N. Yeltsin won 57.3% of the votes. His competitors, N. I. Ryzhkov, 16.8%; V. V. Zhirinovskiy, 7.8%; A. M. Tuleyev, 6.8%; A. M. Makashov, 3.7%; and V. V.

Bakatin, 3.4%. Victory with a large margin over his rivals already in the first round of voting was politically very important, since it provided the status of "popularly elected" and made it possible to interpret his election program as the will of the majority of Russian citizens. The beginning of the formation of the institution of the Russian presidency and the radicalism of the leader, supported by no less radically minded reformers, had a significant impact on the subsequent development of events.

As for M.S. Gorbachev, by the spring of 1991 he was no longer so popular, and was increasingly publicly criticized by both the "left" and the "right". At the Congresses of People's Deputies and in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Soyuz group actively opposed him, accusing the President of encouraging separatism and the collapse of the state, and of surrendering the country's foreign policy positions. Sharp criticism for the actual departure from socialism and the USSR, failures in social and economic policy at the April plenum of the CPSU Central Committee almost led to the resignation of Gorbachev from the post of Secretary General.

In June 1991, the head of the Union government, V. S. Pavlov, asked the Supreme Soviet for additional powers to take urgent measures to save the economy, which was a direct response to the indecision of the Union president. In turn, the radical-liberal forces criticized him for his unwillingness to break with socialism and get rid of the influence of the conservative forces associated with it.

The question of Preserving the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In the first months of 1991, the political confrontation between the all-union and republican authorities took the form of a struggle for the "framework" terms of influence in the Union. The problem of dividing authority between the Center and the republics came to the foreground, which was dubbed "the preparation of a new union treaty".

The idea of holding an all-union referendum was formulated by Gorbachev and approved by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in January 1991. Going for this action, he counted on the numerical predominance of Russians and their patriotism for the state; on representatives of ethnic groups living in "foreign" national territories, who already had no illusions about their prospects in the future "independent states". A calculation was also made to mobilize consolidating segments of Soviet historical memory about the war, post-war reconstruction, joint development of territories, solving common economic problems, and mutual assistance in emergencies. On March 17, 1991, the citizens of the USSR had to answer the question: "Do you consider it necessary to preserve the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a renewed federation of equal in rights sovereign republics, in which human rights and freedoms will be fully guaranteed to any nationality?"

Six republics-Georgia, Lithuania, Moldova, Latvia, Armenia, and Estonia-denied to hold a referendum on their territory. The Russian leadership has also criticized

the idea, pointing out above all that the wording of the question put to the vote contains not one but several questions, and this can distort the will of citizens who have different answers to the different questions actually posed. At the same time, Russia is announcing its own referendum on the establishment of the institution of the president in the republic. The introduction of this post was intended to strengthen its sovereignty in its relations with the Union Center. Under the specific conditions of the time, this meant an increase in centrifugal tendencies, since sovereignty was largely understood as secession.

All in all, 80% of citizens, who had the right to participate in the referendum, came to the polling stations. Of these, 76.4% answered "Yes" to the referendum questions; 21.7 gave a negative answer. About 2% of the ballots were declared invalid. The results of the RSFSR voting looked somewhat paradoxical: on the one hand, 71.3 % of participants voted for the preservation of the Union in the Gorbachev referendum. On the other hand, almost as many (70%) were in favor of introducing the office of president. The outcome of the referendum on Russia was difficult to interpret as a victory of the USSR President's plan. First of all, the republic was in the penultimate place by the percentage of positive responses; only Ukraine had a lower percentage (70.2%). Secondly, they testified to Yeltsin's high chances of winning the upcoming elections. All of this did not bode well for peace between the two centers of power.

The integration resource of the referendum results was weakened not only in Russia. In Ukraine, according to

the decree of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, simultaneously with the all-union referendum, the population was polled on the question "Do you agree that Ukraine should be part of the Union of Soviet Sovereign States based on the declaration on the state sovereignty of Ukraine?" The number of citizens who answered "yes" to the question on the Republican ballot was 80.17%, i.e., more than voted for the Union. This confirmed the basic idea of the Declaration about the priority of Ukrainian laws over the Union laws, which practically excluded the creation of a new federal state with full participation of Ukraine. Kazakhstan also "distinguished itself": its authorities offered their own wording of the referendum question instead of the Union one: "Do you consider it necessary to preserve the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a Union of equal sovereign states?" In the republic, 94% of the voters gave a positive answer.

The referendum of March 17, 1991 and its results allowed the President of the USSR to continue his attempts to resume the development of a new Union Treaty in order to complete it in a short time. Preparation for the third draft since the spring of 1990 began. From the end of 1990, the political initiative in this matter was entirely transferred to the republican elites, and the influence of the central structures was extremely weakened. Under these conditions Gorbachev almost completely reoriented to direct dialogue with the republican leaders, ignoring the position of the highest authorities of the USSR, using them only when it was necessary to support his own initiatives with collegial decisions. Under the new conditions, the success of the talks could only be reached with the USSR President's

tacit agreement to the confederative structure of the future Union, although it meant departing from the position fixed by the referendum. The USSR President was at least trying to stall the ongoing breakup of the country. The republics, aware of the weak position of the union president, were demanding more and more authority, and truncating the power capabilities of the center to the limit. However, the sides could not completely ignore the referendum results, although they had their own very divergent goals, and that is why they actively used the concepts of a unified union state and federation in their rhetoric, while retreating from them legally.

All this was vividly illustrated by the so called "Novo-Ogara process" (from the name of the residence in the village of Novo-Ogara-Revo near Moscow, where the negotiations took place), the first stage of which lasted from April 23rd to July 23rd, 1991. As their participant Lukyanov recalled, even the last meeting of July 23, during which the final version of the GCC Treaty was discussed, was not constructive. It was proposed to exclude from it the mentioning that the USSR was a sovereign federal state; it was denied the right to own property and defended a one-channel system of tax revenues. The representative of Ukraine made a statement at the meeting that this republic would not decide on its attitude to the Union Treaty until mid-September at the earliest. Only 8 of the 15 Union republics were ready to join the Treaty.

As a result, by approving the draft as a whole, the meeting concluded that it was expedient to sign the Treaty in September-October at the Congress of

People's Deputies of the USSR. Gorbachev supported this order of signing the Union Treaty. However, July 29-30, 1991 in Novo-Ogaryovo were closed-door meetings of Gorbachev with Yeltsin and Nazarbayev, where union president offered the presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan to begin signing the project not in September - October, but on August 20. The republican leaders agreed to this idea, because they understood that the draft treaty in its final wording would not be approved by the USSR Supreme Soviet, and certainly not at the Union Congress of People's Deputies. Since parliamentarians were on vacation in August, the time for signing the "necessary" draft seemed opportune. In exchange for the consent of the republican leaders, Gorbachev accepted Yeltsin's demand for a one-channel system of tax revenues to the budgets. At the insistence of his interlocutors, he also agreed to a reshuffle in the higher echelon of Soviet power: V. S. Pavlov, V. A. Kryuchkov, D. T. Yazov, B. K. Pugo, G. I. Janaen were to be immediately replaced. These people in June-July 1991 actively advocated the adoption of vigorous measures to preserve the USSR and consistently criticized the "Novogarevites". On August 4, Gorbachev went on vacation to the Crimea.

The final draft of the Treaty reflected both the scale of the claims of the public and the level of the actual disintegration of the USSR. According to the document, the participating republics were recognized as sovereign states, "full members of the international community," the Union of Soviet Sovereign Republics was defined as a "sovereign federal democratic state," but the context implied that the sovereignty of the republics was primary. The Union was to retain the property necessary for the

exercise of the powers vested in it, but was deprived of its own tax revenues: a single channel system of tax collection was established, under which the Union budget determined

The republics determined the budget on the basis of articles and expenditures submitted by the Union. The document did not fix any time limits for the adoption of the new Basic Law, which did not bind the participating states by certain obligations. In fact, this provision preserved for an indefinite time the situation of a legal conflict which characterized the relations between the Center and the republics after the adoption of the declarations on sovereignty, from which nobody was going to renounce in 1991. It was a real possibility that the 1922 Treaty on the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics would become invalid for the signatory states from the same date. It would have meant a "soft" exit from the USSR, which would have freed the new countries from having to deal with their former "brothers" in the Soviet Union under a law passed in April 1990.

The legal assessment of the final draft of the Treaty was made by a group of 15 experts before August 19, 1991. They questioned the legal significance of the document and found it to be internally inconsistent, illogical and having no significance as a legal successor. The experts stated that "by recognizing a federation, the treaty in fact creates not even a confederation, but simply a club of states. It leads directly to the destruction of the USSR; it has laid all the foundations for tomorrow's currencies, armies, customs, etc.". By drawing this line secretly, implicitly, it is doubly dangerous, because it blurs all the concepts to such an extent that a state monster is

created. As J.M. Baturin, a witness to the Novogarev discussions, noted, "the choice between legal quality and political expediency was made in favor of the latter."

The wide public could discuss only one, the very first Novogarev's draft, which was approved on June 16, 1991, and published on the 27th. Further work on it was carried out in secrecy, which caused various rumors and stirred up the members of the government, deputies and public organizations. The final document was not published until August 16, 1991. It was published only on the 16th of August 1991, three days before it was supposed to be signed (on Friday in fact). This made it practically impossible to discuss it in detail and make any corrections.

The USSR Supreme Soviet was only able to consider the first draft of the Treaty, prepared by the Big Ten (9+1). The decision of July 12, 1991 provided for the formation of a plenipotentiary delegation of the Soviet Union for revising and coordinating the text of the Treaty in accordance with the remarks and proposals made by the committees, commissions, members of the USSR Supreme Soviet and people's deputies of the USSR. In fact, this meant a vote of no confidence in the President of the USSR, who ignored the position of the union legislators during the joint work with the republican leaders on the documents. That is why the union peacemakers formulated a whole series of principled remarks.

The Treaty's final version was not subject to the finalization of the text. However, they were not taken into account when finalizing the text. This can explain the

fact that Gorbachev never gathered a union delegation to discuss it. It was this fact that forced Lukyanov to prepare a "Statement of the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR" on August 16, 1991, in which he again reproduced the ideas of the USSR Supreme Soviet Resolution of July 12, 1991. The author emphasized that the Union Treaty was necessary, but it should be concluded after the finalization in the USSR Supreme Soviet and with the obligatory reflection of the results of the referendum on March 17, where the majority voted for the preservation of a renewed, but unified federal state. Certain demarches (maneuver) were also made by the Union government. On the initiative of V. S. Pavlov, the Presidium of the Cabinet discussed the final text of the Treaty on August 17. It also approved the idea, but formulated a number of requirements which the ministers considered necessary to be included in a protocol annexed to the Treaty, which was to become an integral and binding part of it. Gorbachev agreed to meet with the prime minister on August 19 to discuss the proposals, but their nature was such that a compromise could hardly be reached anymore.

All this led to the fact that the outcome of the "Novogarev process" even before August 19 was a document that meant the end of the existence of the USSR as a single state. The possible signing of the Treaty would not have meant an "instant disappearance" of the USSR, since the single army, currency and infrastructure connecting the Soviet space (energy, transport, etc.) still existed, but their division in the conscious liquidation of common administrative institutions was a matter of the near future. The treaty draft prepared for signing essentially

legalized the relations between the former soviet republics, which were fixed later in the December 1991 documents.

Foreign Policy

The huge changes that occurred in the world, especially on the European continent, in 1989-1990 were consolidated in a series of important documents. Delegations from 34 countries met in Paris in November 1990 within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. It resulted in the adoption of the Paris Charter for a New Europe, which put an end to the "era of confrontation and division". It declared its intention to open "a new era of democracy, peace and unity". The signatories to the Charter expressed their readiness not only to work together on security issues, but also to develop broad and comprehensive cooperation based on shared values.

Also in Paris. On November 19, 1990, leaders of twenty-two countries of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and NATO signed the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Negotiations on these problems lasted for more than 30 years, but it was not until 1990 that the parties were able to reach an agreement. The treaty provided for a significant reduction of armaments - from the Atlantic to the Urals. The remaining forces were to be sufficient for defense missions, but the ability to conduct offensive operations was to be dramatically reduced. Collective ceilings were set for NATO and Allied Forces.

Thus, the reduction was again asymmetrical, i.e., the number of tanks had to be kept below 20,000 (at the time of signing the treaty the NATO countries had 30,000 and the Organization for Mutual Assistance had 60,000). The Treaty was designed to become the basis of a new security system. The November 19, 1990 "Joint Declaration of the Twenty-Two Nations" stated that the signatory countries "are no longer adversaries and will build new partnerships and offer each other a hand of friendship.

In 1990-1991, the Soviet-American relations were developing dynamically. In June 1990, during Gorbachev's visit to Washington, a series of documents on cooperation in a variety of areas was signed: an agreement on trade, on the destruction and non-production of chemical weapons; a protocol to the treaty on nuclear testing, an agreement on cooperation in the use of atomic energy, and on student exchanges. According to Gorbachev, these documents demonstrated that our joint line to move from constructive understanding to constructive interaction is bearing fruit.

The new relations between the Soviet Union and the United States were severely tested in the acute politico-military crisis in the Persian Gulf (August 1990-February 1991). In response to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, Western countries decided to use force against the aggressor. For the USSR, the situation was complicated by the fact that Iraq had for a long time been its most important trading partner, which was also tied to our country by the 1972 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. Nevertheless, the USSR joined hands with

Western countries against the aggressor. On November 29, 1990 our representative at the UN voted for the resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq.

On July 31, 1991, the important Soviet-American Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) was signed in Moscow. According to this document, the number of intercontinental ballistic missiles in each state was reduced by 20-40% to achieve an equal limit for both parties. It was not to exceed 1,600 carriers and 6,000 charges. The reduction took into account the differences in the nuclear weapons structure of the USSR and the United States. As in the case of the INF Treaty (1987), the signing of this agreement was made possible by resolving the issue of on-site inspections. The treaty was a breakthrough in reduction of the nuclear arsenals of the two largest nuclear powers.

Between 1990 and 1991, the Soviet Union was losing its positions in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, whose leaders actively reoriented themselves toward the West. This was facilitated by erroneous steps of the Soviet leadership, in particular, the transition in 1990 to world prices using freely convertible currency in settlements with CMEA countries. Cooperation among the former socialist countries within the Warsaw Treaty Organization was also fading, which led to the dissolution of the organization in March 1991. Beginning in the spring of that year, the USSR began trying to build new relationships with its former partners on a bilateral basis. The treaty drafts included a clause stipulating that neither side could enter into alliances against the other side of the treaty, nor deploy foreign troops on its territory. But none of the former Soviet allies expressed

any willingness to make such a limitation of their sovereignty in the future. Oral agreements with U.S. and European parties not to expand NATO were not documented.

The deteriorating economic situation and political difficulties in the Soviet Union in late 1990 - 1991 made it difficult to conduct an effective foreign policy. Another negative factor was the undermining of the country's unity by the sovereignty aspirations of some Soviet republics. In spring 1991, the idea of "replacing the Center" and shifting the center of gravity in cooperation from the Soviet Union to the republics was gradually germinating in the United States. In July 1991, at the meeting of the G7 and Gorbachev in London, the Soviet leader was denied the large-scale economic assistance he had requested. In those particular circumstances, it seriously undermined the position of the allied power structures. And after the political crisis of August 19-21, 1991 the supporters of the disintegration of the USSR in the West practically did not hide their views.

U.S. strategy toward the USSR during the years of "perestroika" was later explained quite frankly by President B. Clinton. Speaking to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in October 1995, he said: "The last 10 years of policy toward the USSR and its allies have convincingly proved the correctness of the course we have taken to eliminate one of the strongest powers in the world, as well as the strongest military bloc. Using the blunders of Soviet diplomacy, the extreme arrogance of Gorbachev and his inner circle, including those who were openly pro-American, we have achieved what Truman was about to do to the Soviet Union with the atomic bomb."

True, with one major difference - we got a raw materials appendage, a state not destroyed by the atom, which would not have been easy to create. In the course of so-called perestroika, shaking the ideological foundations of the USSR, we were able to bloodlessly take out of the war for world domination a state that was a major competitor to America".

Cultural development during the "perestroika" period

The main processes in the cultural development of the "perestroika" period are connected with the emancipation, overcoming the one-dimensionality of public consciousness, and the formation of a more objective picture of the world around us.

One of the main features of the culture of those years was its publicistic nature, raising major socially important topics, and wide and interested attention to the issues discussed. In 1987, thick magazines published a series of articles about Russia's present, past and future. Novyi Mir published articles by I. M. Klyamkin, "Which Street Leads to the Temple?"; V. I. Selunin and G. N. Khanin, "A Tricky Number"; and N. P. Shmelev, "Advances and Debts." These and other materials aroused great interest by the novelty of the facts involved and their revealing pathos. They posed a global question about the content traversed by the country in the XX century. The materials raised a global question about the content and correctness of the development model chosen in 1917.

Satisfying the hunger for information that had accumulated over the years, the media printed an

enormous amount of materials on the most acute contemporary topics; stories from the past and about how people lived in other countries. Newspaper and magazine circulations skyrocketed: in 1989 the circulation of Argumenty i Fakty "flew up" to 30 million copies (this was even recorded in the Guinness Book of Records); the circulation of Trud increased to 20 million and Pravda - to 10 million. The working style of television changed considerably. It quickly mastered a previously unused genre - "live broadcasting". The programs Vzgl'yad, Before and After Midnight, and The Fifth Wheel enjoyed great popularity with the audience. The anchors of those shows were unusually popular and became figures of Russian politics. The opportunities for independent media became greater after the 1990 release of the Law on Press.

Never before has there been so much interest in history. The country was experiencing a real "history boom. In 1987-1991, newspapers and magazines often published round-table articles on historical subjects and the "reflections" of historians and publicists. Easier access to archival founts resulted in the publication of many sensational documents which were made available to the broader public. It was fundamentally important to lift the veil of secrecy on many pages of the CPSU history. Resumed the publication of the magazine Izvestia of the CPSU Central Committee, which introduced the previously closed Party decisions. Here, for example, for the first time in the Soviet Union was published Khrushchev's report at the 20th Congress of the CPSU on the Stalin personality cult. The political transformation in the USSR made it possible to rehabilitate not only those who had been betrayed but also those who until

recently had been criticized mercilessly in all the CPSU history textbooks. N. I. Bukharin, A. I. Rykov, L. D. Trotsky, L. B. Kamenev, F. F. Raskolnikov, V. A. Antonov-Ovseenko and many others.

The publication of works by Russian philosophers and writers whose names were banned helped restore historical memory. Among them are N. A. Berdyaev, V. S. Solovyov, G. P. Fedotov, P. A. Sorokin, V. V. Rozanov, and I. A. Ilyin. In 1990, the collection "From the Depths", written by Russian philosophers in 1918, was republished. The no less famous Milestones, once a "warning of Russian philosophers to the fate of Russia and the intelligentsia", was published in 1991. A. A. Akhmatova's Requiem, A. P. Platonov's Kotlovan and Chevengur, and E. I. Zamyatin's "We" were published in large circulations. The publications of A. A. Solzhenitsyn ("The Kotlovan" and "Chevengur" by A. P. Platonov, "We" by E. I. Zamyatin) were shocking. Solzhenitsyn ("The Gulag Archipelago") and V. A. Shalamov ("Kolyma Tales") caused a stir.

An event of enormous cultural importance was the state's actual rejection of aggressive atheism. The tradition of Christianity interrupted in 1917 was being revived. Disrupted churches were being rebuilt, and religious schools and seminaries were being opened. At the beginning of the 1990s, 3,120 Orthodox parishes were active in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, and 176 and 460 new Orthodox associations were registered during 1988 and 1989, respectively. The celebration of the millennium of the Baptism of Rus' in 1988 also contributed to a revival of interest in religion and the Church. Other faiths, historically existing in

Russia, were also revived. Mosques, synagogues and Buddhist pagodas were opened and Muslim mosques were reconstructed. An important event of the 1990s was the adoption of the Union and Russian laws "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations" and "On Freedom of Worship," which redefined the nature of state-church relationships. The recognition of the importance of religious tradition in the life of society was reflected in the inclusion of Christmas Day among Russia's national holidays. It was celebrated for the first time in its new capacity on January 7, 1991.

Dramatic changes took place in the cinema. In 1986, the screening of T.E. Abuladze's film *Repentance* came as a shock. The film demonstrated the cinematographic community's readiness for a profound rethinking of the most important events in Russian history. More than 100 previously "shelved" films were returned from the shelves. The public could see the works of A.A. Tarkovsky, A. Y. Herman, A. S. Mikhalkov-Konchalsky and other directors. The passion for publicistic documentary filmmaking in 1985-1991 was also reflected in the movies. The classics of those years were semi-documentary films of S.S. Govorukhin "You Can't Live Like That" and Yu.Podnieks "Is It Easy to Be Young"? Cinematography among the first of other forms of art encountered such a new phenomenon as commercialization, which significantly influenced the content of artistic creativity.

In the second half of the 1980s, the theater also acquired a new image. Characteristic was the wide development of the studio movement. The theatrical experiments of S.E. Kurginyan (Theatre-studio "On

Planks"), M.G. Rozovsky (Theatre-studio " (Nika and gates), V. Belyakovich (Theatre-Studio "On the South-West"). Its publicistic nature was vividly reflected in popular productions of M. A. Zakharov at the Leninsky Komsomol Theater (plays by M. F. Shatrov, "The Dictatorship of Conscience," "Blue Horses on Red Grass," "Farther, Farther, Farther", which brought Leninist issues to the stage in a new way). In the first years of Perestroika, the rock music culture emerged from the underground. Concerts of local and foreign rock bands drew stadiums of spectators.

However, not all of the processes taking place in the spiritual realm were unequivocally positive. "Free from direct party diktat", the mass media were quickly drawn into sharp political battles, at times reaching unbridled and unattractive denigration of opponents, which negatively affected the public atmosphere. Proclaimed "de-ideologization", getting rid of communist dogmatism, in fact, turned into an accelerated affirmation of another, bourgeois-liberal ideology.

The rejection of confrontation and rapprochement with the West often resulted in an uncritical attitude toward it, and an infatuation with its far from indisputable "achievements". This was particularly detrimental in the spheres of culture, art and social sciences. Cinemas, television, and theaters showed mainly low-quality films and productions, the main content of which was propaganda of the cult of violence, pornography, and morally unconstrained lust for profit. Thereby dealt a very tangible blow to the aesthetic and moral values of Russian society, which was particularly detrimental to the formation of the consciousness of the younger

generation.

§ Section 4: The Dismantling of Union Statehood.

End of August - December 1991.

Political crisis of August 19-21 of 1991.

Destructive processes in the country were developing so intensively that ordinary measures were no longer sufficient to restore basic governability. And all political forces were aware of this. Two clearly defined centers of political power fought for the right to lead the country out of the crisis: the Soviet leadership, minus Gorbachev, and the Russian leaders. The uncompromising confrontation was influenced by the fact that each of them had not just personal ambitions, but different ideas about the economic, political, and national-state development of the country. The former favored the socialist choice, the development of the Soviet system, and the preservation of a unified state within the USSR. The latter declared a commitment to liberal approaches to economics and the need to change the Soviet system, and they believed it could be done only within a confederative union of states.

The top leadership of the USSR was vehemently opposed to the August 20 signing of the text of the Union Treaty. Unsuccessful in their attempts to persuade Gorbachev to make necessary changes to the text, they

decided to act on their own. In the absence of the USSR President (he was on vacation in the Crimea), the State Committee on the State of Emergency (GKChP) was created on August 18 at one of the KGB "facilities" in Moscow. Its members included O. D. Baklanov (First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Defense Council), V. A. Kryuchkov (Chairman of the USSR KGB), V. S. Pavlov (USSR Prime Minister), B. K. Pugo (USSR Minister of Internal Affairs), V. A. Starodubtsev (Chairman of the USSR Peasant Union), A. I. Tizyakov (President of the Association of State Enterprises and Facilities of Industry, Construction, Transport and Communication of the USSR), D. T. K. Kryuchkov (President of the USSR Association of State Enterprises and Facilities of the USSR), Yazov (USSR Minister of Defense), G.I. Yanayev (vice president of the USSR). The composition of the committee was intended to demonstrate the unity of the highest authorities and the main social groups in their concern for the fate of the Union. On the same day, A. I. Lukyanov, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, interrupted his vacation and returned to Moscow, but was not included in the GKChP.

On the morning of August 19, a decree by Vice President G. I. Yanayev was made public, announcing that Gorbachev was "unable" to perform the duties of president "for health reasons" and that Yanayev himself had assumed the position of head of state. The second document was "For the Appearance of the Soviet Leadership," signed by G. Yanayev, Pavlov and Baklanov, that a state of emergency was declared in some regions of Soviet Union for six months on August 19, and the GKChP was called to implement it. The third document was "Appeal to the Soviet People", which for

the first time stated at such a high level that "the policy of reforms initiated by Gorbachev had reached a dead end" and analyzed the reasons that caused "disbelief, apathy and despair", loss of confidence in the government and ungovernability of the country. Among the main reasons was "the rise of extremist forces bent on the liquidation of the Soviet Union and seizing power at any price". For the first time in Soviet history, the document did not call for protection of socialism, not even the adjectives "communist" and "socialist". The appeal to patriotic feelings was designed to emphasize the criticality of the moment, to consolidate all state-oriented citizens of the USSR, regardless of their political sympathies.

The fourth document, "Resolution of the State Committee for the State of Emergency No. 1" - enumerated a set of priority measures for implementation: This was followed by a list of necessary actions to protect public order and security of the state, society and citizens; measures to prevent rallies, street marches and demonstrations as well as strikes; to establish control over mass media, to establish order and discipline in all spheres of society; timely harvesting and satisfaction of priority social needs, preventing the normalization of the situation. The authors concluded with an appeal to all healthy political forces to unite to "put an end to the present troubled times." GKChP's rule was reinforced by the entry of troops (4,000 soldiers and officers) and armored vehicles in the capital.

The Russian leadership, against which the activity of the GKChP was primarily directed, promptly, thoughtfully and comprehensively responded to these actions. First, a powerful information campaign was launched. The

theme of "taking care" of the president of the USSR and his health took center stage, and it was supposed to focus the attention on the questionable reason for Gorbachev's removal from office. The GKChP was demonized in the public mind, calling what was happening on the first day "the putsch of the junta," which conjured up images of bloody dictators and legal lawlessness. Second, the Russian leaders summoned their supporters under the walls of the White House (the residence of the Supreme Soviet and the Government of the RSFSR) and tried to keep a "human ring" (according to various sources, there were from 4000 to 90,000 "defenders" there) throughout the whole period of confrontation. This was an important deterrent, since both opposing sides understood the political consequences of possible bloodshed. Thirdly, B. Yeltsin, proceeding from the idea that the Soviet leadership had lost legitimacy in connection with the "state crime", signed a series of decrees, which reassigned all the executive organs of the USSR located in the RSFSR, including units of the KGB, Interior Ministry and Defense Ministry of the USSR. He also assumed the authority of the commander of the Armed Forces of the USSR in the RSFSR.

The confrontation between supporters of the GKChP and the Russian authorities took place only in the center of the capital. Leaders of other Soviet republics, regions and territories mostly exercised restraint, limiting themselves to adopting documents expressing their readiness to follow the USSR Constitution and Russian laws, and condemning the state of emergency.

Analysis of the events of August 19-21, 1991 shows that

their outcome was influenced not so much by force or the legal validity of the parties' positions, as by their sense of the political situation, the ability to gather their supporters at the right moment and in the right place, and put the enemy in such conditions in which even numerical or force superiority would not bring them victory.

One of the GKChP's main goals was to exert pressure on the Russian leadership, forcing it to sit down at the negotiating table and formulate terms of a future union treaty that were acceptable for the preservation of the USSR and moving the country out of crisis. In doing so, its leaders were counting, not without foundation, on the rejection by the majority of the population of Gorbachev, the absence of a mass stable political base for Yeltsin, and the KGB, the Interior Ministry, and the Soviet Army under their control. However, they underestimated the information-political and organizational "mobilization", the uncompromising stance, the opponents' readiness to go "to the end", and the population's aversion to military intervention.

The Tbilisi, Baku, and Vilnius "syndromes" when the army was used against extremists but was blamed for raising arms against "civilians" made it difficult and even impossible to involve it in active operations in Moscow. In those cases, however, the use of the armed forces was preceded by major provocations, while in the capital everything looked like a "showdown at the top. The GKChP was won by those who suggested involving the army for psychological pressure. As Marshal Dmitriy T. Yazov later said, he agreed to join the Committee with a firm reservation that the army would be assigned the role

of a passive pressurizing force. The reluctance of the power structures (the army, the KGB, and the Interior Ministry) to participate in a political "showdown", and the active rejection of the GKChP by a number of high-ranking military officials largely predetermined the outcome of the August 19 confrontation.

On the night of August 20 to 21, an incident occurred, which was to have a significant impact on the political situation. In strange circumstances, three young men among the "defenders" of the White House were killed. Later investigation of these events showed that the incident was not an accident, but rather the result of a premeditated provocation. Nevertheless, the bloodshed of "civilians" by the GKChP-controlled military was the final straw that ended the hesitation of the Committee's already unstable supporters, allowing the Russian leadership to launch an all-out political offensive against its opponents and achieve a complete and unconditional victory.

On the morning of August 21, the Collegium of the USSR Ministry of Defense called for the withdrawal of troops from Moscow and the lifting of high alert,

The Minister of Defense was advised to withdraw from the GKChP without delay. The most definite advocates were the commanders-in-chief of the Air Force, E. I. Shaposhnikov; of the Strategic Missile Forces, Y. P. Maksimov, and of the Navy, V. N. Chernavin. Yazov's deputies were also in solidarity with them. By this time new military units had approached Moscow, but they were not brought into the capital.

The events of August 19-21, could be seen as a manifestation of acute political crisis, and as an attempted coup d'etat. Much depended on Gorbachev's position, which was not clear to any of the conflicting sides. Therefore, the decisive factor in the confrontation between the GKChP and the Russian leadership at the final stage of the political crisis of August 19-21, 1991, was the question of who would be the first to meet with Gorbachev and "pull" him on his side. Both GKChP supporters and representatives of the Russian leadership, led by Vice President A. V. Rutskoi, arrived in Foros almost simultaneously to see Gorbachev.

Gorbachev made his choice, he refused to accept the "conspirators", and late in the evening of August 21, he returned to Moscow, surrounded by the "winners". There, in Vnukovo, by order of the Prosecutor General of Russia V. G. Stepankov, V.A. Kryuchkov, D.T. Yazov and A.I. Tizyakov were detained and isolated. In the following days they were joined by other active participants in the events.

The crisis of August 19-21 turned the latent disintegration of the Soviet Union into an open form, beginning a new period (until the end of 1991), the main content of which was the gradual dismantling of union structures.

Liquidation of the state and political structures of the USSR.

After the August crisis, the situation developed in which the leaders' decisions were determined not by the

Constitution and laws of the USSR, but by the real balance of power and variously understood "political expediency". The republican government bodies were already acting without regard to the Union center. The GKChPK speech became a convenient excuse for the rejection of serious integration proposals. The dismantling of the union political and state structures had been gaining momentum since the end of August. On this basis, some historians believe that in reality the Soviet Union "died" right after August and remained formally in existence until the end of the year.

On September 2 and 5, 1991, the Fifth (Extraordinary) Congress of People's Deputies worked in Moscow and politically and legally formalized the post-crisis situation. According to the congress documents, the previous Constitution of the USSR had lost its force. The country was to enter a transitional period, and the end of this period was tied to the adoption of a new Constitution and the election of new government bodies. As part of that transitional period, it was proposed that all republics wishing to do so sign a treaty on the union of sovereign States, in which each of them could independently determine the forms of their participation. The leaders who took the floor asked for support for their republics' intentions to join the UN and become full subjects of international law,

Despite the leaders' optimism, many delegates had the feeling that they were attending a meeting of the doomed, a "funeral of the Union. And indeed, the congress adopted the constitutional Law "On the Bodies of State Power and Administration of the Union of SSR in the Transitional Period". It provided for "termination of

activity" of the supreme bodies of state power of the USSR - the Congress and the Supreme Soviet, which had the right to adopt laws common to all republics. According to this law the State Council of the USSR was created with the participation of the president of the USSR and the top officials of the republics, who were given the real management functions for an indefinite "transitional period". Evaluating what was happening, the president of Russia declared that it was the end of the Cold War that had lasted more than a year between the republics and the center of the union.

The creation of the State Council of the USSR legalized the situation that had existed since late April 1991, when the Novogarevsky process began. It was then that the most important issues regarding the future of the union began to be discussed behind closed doors among the highest leaders of the republics, who did not always inform the representative bodies about what was happening at the talks. In practice, the State Council became not a body for "coordinated decision of domestic and foreign policy issues affecting common interests" as it was initially declared, but an institution within which the republics that had got a "taste of freedom" made their moves toward complete independence.

On August 23, 1991, Boris Yeltsin signed the decree On Suspension of the Communist Party of the RSFSR, whose provisions were later developed in a series of other acts and led to the de-facto banning of the Communist Party. The reason for the decree was the belief that the CPRF supported the coup d'état perpetrated by the GKChP. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Prosecutor's Office of the RSFSR were

instructed to "investigate the facts of anti-constitutional activities of the Communist Party of the RSFSR." According to the August 25 Presidential Decree "On the Property of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of the RSFSR," all Communist Party movable and immovable property, including cash and foreign currency accounts, became the national property of Russia. On the same day, Gorbachev announced that he had resigned as General Secretary and called for the party's self-dissolution. These events triggered a chain reaction in the union republics. By the end of August, the activities of the Communist Party were suspended in Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Estonia; the Communist Party was banned in Ukraine, and Moldova and Lithuania. The process of "deparatization" of the republics was largely completed by mid-September 1991.

One component of the dismantling of the Soviet structures was the appointment to the highest positions in the USSR only of persons supported by the Russian leadership. Gorbachev was deprived of the right to select people at his own discretion. "We have already had a bitter experience, August taught us a lot, so please, now any personnel changes - only in coordination with me," the Russian president told him after he returned from Foros. The main criteria for nominating candidates to key positions was determined: their attitude toward the GKChP (the State Committee on the State of Emergency), and the degree of support for the Russian leadership during the August 1991 events. Only those who were actively supported by the White House had a chance to be appointed, and "neutral" candidates were not considered.

On August 25, Gorbachev liquidated the USSR Council of Ministers by decree. In its place was the Committee for the Operative Management of the National Economy, which was headed by Russian Prime Minister I. C. Sylaeu. The creation of the Committee and the appointment of its leadership marked another important polevernal trend - the transfer of the Soviet structures under the management of the Russian authorities. Thus, the "dual power" that had existed on the territory of the republic for more than a year was overcome. By the end of 1991, the civil and military procuracy, the Finance Ministry and the USSR State Planning Committee had been placed under the Russian jurisdiction.

On August 24, 1991 the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR proclaimed Ukraine an independent democratic state, declaring that from that moment only the Constitution, laws, regulations and other legislative acts of the republic were valid on its territory. The same day Belarus declared its independence, August 27 - Moldova, 30th - Azerbaijan, 31st - Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. The Georgian leader, B. Gamsakhurdia had demanded that the world community de facto and de jure recognize Georgian independence. On 20-21 August the supreme soviets of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia declared their independence and restored their pre-1940 constitutions. The independence of the latter three was recognized by Russia on 24 August.

Already in August the KGB was deprived of several tens of thousands of special forces. The Security Service was transformed into the Security Directorate under the Office of the President of the USSR on August 29, with

the separation from the KGB of a complex of departments responsible for government communications, encryption, and radioelectronic reconnaissance. The Committee for Government Communications under the President of the USSR was created on their basis. After these comparatively small-scale structural changes the next step was made for the largest divisions of the Committee: intelligence, counterintelligence, and border guards.

On September 11, the College of the KGB was replaced by the Coordinating Council, which consisted of the chairmen of the republics' committees. The republics received the right to independently appoint chairmen of their committees, which in fact became autonomous heads with great powers. One of the main problems related to decentralization was solved during the creation of the independent security service of the RSFSR. Here, the peculiarity of the situation was related to the fact that the KGB was deprived of "its" territory and became a purely coordinating structure. As a result, even before the formal dissolution of the KGB, the nature of the KGB's relations with the republics' committees was determined by bilateral agreements which stipulated the scope of responsibilities and the authority delegated to the center.

By early December, the majority of Soviet structures were either dissolved, divided, or transferred to the jurisdiction of Russia, or were simply disorganized. As S.M. Shakhrai noted in early December 1991, by that time "legally and factually, the existence of the Union could not be proven."

"Novo-Ogaryovo-2" and the legal execution of the collapse of the USSR.

The questions concerning the possible form of the union of the union republics, created by the decision of the V Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR, were in the center of the attention of the State Council. These discussions, as before, were held in Novo-Ogaryovo, but Russia and Ukraine played the main roles. During the period of its existence (September to November), the State Council held seven meetings.

After August, proponents of preserving the Union believed that the republics would be more willing and eager to sign an economic treaty than to conclude a political agreement. That is why the second half of September and the first half of October were particularly attentive to this topic.

G. A. Yavlinsky, who was responsible for drafting the document, believed that the main task of the Economic Union was to consolidate the efforts of the sovereign states in order to form a common market and conduct a coordinated economic policy as a prerequisite for overcoming the crisis. He stressed that the accession to the Union of Sovereign States was not conditioned by signing a treaty on the Union of Sovereign States.

On October 18, 1991, the Treaty on the Economic Community of Sovereign States was signed by the President of the USSR and the leaders of eight republics (not including Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, and Azerbaijan). Given the destruction of the former state, the treaty called for the "completion" of union property,

the elimination of a common central bank, and the introduction of their own national currencies. Some 20 additional agreements in specific areas of the economy were needed for the Treaty to work.

These, however, could at best be prepared and ratified only after four months. This made the entire Treaty a declaratory document in the context of an acute economic crisis. The republics were extremely suspicious of the possibility of creating supranational governing bodies, which initially put the implementation of all the agreements in doubt.

M. S. Gorbachev realized that the implementation of the articles of the economic agreement would be hindered by the unsolved problem of statehood, the problem of a new Union. Therefore, in parallel to the preparation of the economic agreement, intensive consultations on the future Union Treaty were underway. From the beginning of September 1991, its drafting was being predominantly developed by representatives of the Soviet and Russian authorities, with the latter setting the tone. Initially, Gorbachev insisted on the "union state" formula, with a common constitution and direct elections of a common president. But he was not able to defend those positions: in the final Novogarevsky draft of November 14, the future union was defined as a "confederative democratic state. This state would have no constitution, but it was supposed to elect a president (through electors), a bicameral parliament (both republics and districts), a government, and even a capital, which the "Russians" originally described as "the seat of the union bodies".

The meeting of the State Council on November 14

ended on an optimistic note. An agreement had been reached to begin initiating the new Treaty on November 25, 1991. However, the signing of documents did not take place on that day. The Russian delegation proposed to return to the already agreed text of the draft of the new Union Treaty and to drop the reference to a 'confederal democratic state', leaving the reference to a 'confederation of independent states'. The position of the Supreme Soviet, which was not ready to ratify the previously agreed version, was cited as a pretext for the demarche. Besides, Gltzin said that "signing a treaty without Ukraine is a futile business" and suggested "waiting for Ukraine" until a referendum is held there on December 1.

On that day, 90.32% of those who took part in the vote supported the independence of the republic, and L. M. Kravchuk was elected president. On December 2, it was recognized by Russia, and on December 3, in a conversation with American President G. Bush, Kravchuk said that in the next few days, leaders of the Slavic republics would meet in Minsk. On December 5, 1991 Kravchuk was sworn in as president, and the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine adopted an "Address to the Parliaments and Peoples of All Countries", which declared, inter alia, that the 1922 Treaty on the Formation of the USSR was null and void.

On December 8, 1991, the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus, S. S. Shushkevich, the President of the RSFSR, B. N. Yeltsin, and the President of Ukraine, L. M. Kravchuk, in Belaya Vezha, near Minsk, signed an "Agreement on the Creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States", the preamble to

which stated that "the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a subject of international law and a geopolitical reality ceases to exist". However, formally, the Union continued to exist, since other republics that, according to the Constitution, were co-founders of the single state along with Russia, Ukraine, and Belorussia, had not declared their withdrawal from it. That is why, from the interlunar legal point of view, the USSR ceased to exist on December 21, 1991. On December 21, 1991, eight more republics joined the Treaty of Belovezhskaya Alma-Ata on the formation of the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States), with the rights of the founders.

Regrets

Today, the negative consequences of the liquidation of the USSR are obvious, and the majority of Russians regret the collapse of the unified country. However, the question arises why, at the end of 1991, this majority of the Russian population perceived the news of the official "demise" of the USSR relatively indifferently? In answering this question a number of factors must be taken into account.

✓ First, there was fatigue from prolonged uncertainty.

For many months, it was felt that the country was in a state of half-decay, which could not end in any way. In this respect, Bialowieza seemed to be the last choice.

✓ Second, for a long time everybody witnessed the growing inability of the central administrative structures, which were being torn apart by the republics, and which led to their almost complete collapse or paralysis by December of 1991.

✓ Third, psychologically the disappearance of the USSR

was easier to understand because this fact was legally fixed in the Agreement on the Creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, i.e. *it was presented not as liquidation, but as transformation of the pre-existing state*. Moreover, in Byelorussia the document on the coordination of the economic policy was signed at the same time. In this respect the Agreement was in line with the Novyy Harev tradition, which provided for signing additional agreements, without which the Treaty on the Alliance would also "hang up". Politicians, however, were convincing the population that a new stage of truly voluntary unification and equal cooperation between the peoples was beginning.

On December 23, during the meeting between Gorbachev and Yeltsin, they discussed the new stage of truly voluntary and equal cooperation between the peoples. Yeltsin discussed the issues related to the termination of the union structures. On December 25, 1991, the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR approved a new name of the republic: the Russian Federation (Russia). On the same day, at 19:38 the red Union flag was lowered over the Kremlin and replaced by the Russian tricolor.

§ 5. The RSFSR on the eve of its transformation into the Russian Federation.

September - December 1991.

Changes in the system of state power and administration

After the political crisis of August 19-21, 1991, a qualitatively new stage of the policy of the Russian authorities began. In 1990 - mid-1991, they had been directed against the Soviet center, but now it became possible to concentrate on the realization of reforms. An active transformation of the entire system of political, economic and social relations unfolded.

Anti-communist sentiments dominated among the August victors, which in the second half of 1991 began to define the official course of the policy of rapidly moving toward independence of the RSFSR, (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic). This course also received theoretical justification. On August 28, a group of well-known public figures of "Demrossia" made a statement, where the events of August 19~21 were treated as the "August Revolution". Politicians noted that it was possible to perceive with different and mixed feelings the collapse of the state, which had been called the Russian Empire, and then the USSR, but "this accomplished fact should be welcomed by all true democrats as an essential side of the collapse of the communist regime and as a manifestation of a progressive trend in principle". The political crisis of August 19-21 soon came to be called the anticommunist or democratic revolution. Visible evidence of change was the dismantling of monuments - symbols of the "totalitarian era" - Lenin, Dzerzhinsky, Andropov, the return of historical names to cities, streets (Yekaterinburg, Pavlov Posad).

The defeat of the supreme representatives of union structures gave a new powerful impetus to the concentration of managerial powers in the hands of Russia's executive branch, embodied by the institution of the president. It was connected to the notion that, in a time of dynamic economic and political change, the country needed a stronger executive that was capable of effectively and promptly addressing the problems that life presented. On the socio-political level, it led to changes in the Soviet system of power, which combined the legislative, administrative and supervisory functions. The first practical steps in this direction were the direct elections of the heads of the executive power on the all-Russian level (President). Further development of this trend demanded the election of the heads of the executive powers of the territories, regions, and cities of Russia. The next step dictated the need for the separation of power and authority between the new executive structures and the previously "all-powerful Soviets".

On August 21, on the wave of confrontation with the GKChP, the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR adopted a resolution that granted the President of the RSFSR the right to dismiss the chairpersons (of all levels) of Soviets of People's Deputies in the event that the Soviets failed to fulfill the RSFSR legislation, presidential decrees and acts of the government or decisions of anti-constitutional bodies. No less revolutionary was the second point of the decree, which introduced the post of the head of administration in a kray, oblast and other administrative-territorial units as the head of the corresponding executive body. The head of the administration became the legal successor of the executive committee of the

Council of People's Deputies. In the third paragraph of the decree, the President of the RSFSR had the right ("until the adoption of the law", which would regulate the procedure of elections, i.e. for a clearly indefinite period) to unilaterally appoint heads of administrations and dismiss them from these positions. The decree was to take effect from the moment of its adoption. The document considerably changed the existing system of administrative relations, considerably limited the power functions of the Soviets and strengthened the "executive vertical" subordinated directly (and almost exclusively) to the president.

On September 21, 1991, Presidential Decree No. 112 On the Role of the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR in the System of the Executive Power of the Russian Federation was published. On the one hand, it assigned the Council of Ministers the tasks of "building a dynamic model of market economy", and on the other hand, it defined the relationship between the Council of Ministers and the president. It stipulated, in particular, that the president should not only control the activities of the Council of Ministers and "jointly solve the principal issues of organizing the work of the RSFSR Government, commissions and other working bodies", but also, if necessary, preside at its meetings for "providing the RSFSR Government with its full authority".

The decisions on changing the balance of power adopted at the 5th Congress of RSFSR (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic) People's Deputies (October 28 - November 13, 1991) had a huge impact on the subsequent political development of the country. The Decree "On the organization of executive power during

the period of radical economic reform" gave the president the right to independently reorganize the structure of the higher executive power of Russia and independently decide the issues of cadre appointments in this system. Thus the president was given extraordinary freedom in terms of selecting persons for the highest positions in the structure of executive power, without being obliged to coordinate his appointments even with parliament.

Another decree: "On Legal Support of the Economic Reform" stipulated that the laws of the USSR and RSFSR "during the period of the radical economic reform shall be applied in the part that does not contradict the acts adopted in accordance with this decree". These acts (presidential decrees) were supposed to be issued for the purpose of operational regulation of the economic reform. The adoption of this decree signaled Russia's entry into a very specific period of political and legal development, when presidential decrees began to serve as substitute or competing legislation. It is possible to judge about the directions of development of the emerging "decree law" by the sphere of interests of the State-legal department (GRU - **Russian**: Chief Intelligence Office, not KGB) of the Presidential Administration, created and headed in 1991 by S. M. (M.S. Gorbachev?)

It immediately caused enormous anxiety in society, stirring up memories of a similar "unified agency" of the early 50s. That is why simultaneously two deputy groups and several committees of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR applied to the newly-established Constitutional Court with a petition to verify the constitutionality of the

decree. It was his first case. Having considered the issue promptly, the Constitutional Court on January 14, 1992, annulled the presidential decree and declared it unconstitutional, and the merger did not take place, much to the satisfaction of many.

A Turnaround in Federal Policy. After August 1991, a new federalist policy in Russia was introduced. The suggestion to "swallow sovereignties" in 1990 was finally declared wrong in autumn 1991, and a struggle began for preserving the former autonomies in the legal framework of Russia. However, it was not easy to do, because the process of sovereignty already had its inertia.

Chechen Republic

The situation was most difficult in the Chechen Republic. Immediately after the 'putsch' the opposition in the form of the Executive Committee of the UCCHN led by General D. Dudayev began to overthrow the 'party clan', led by Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the republic, D. Zavgaev. The National Guard began to form and seize weapons and military equipment stored in depots. On September 1, 1991, the Executive Committee of the UCCHN decided to dissolve the Supreme Soviet of the Chechen Republic, whose successor was to be the Provisional High Council (PHC). On 4 September, units of the Guards took control of the republic, the television and administrative buildings of the executive power, including the residence of the Council of Ministers. And on 6 September, Dudayev's supporters stormed the building of the Supreme Council of the Chechen

Republic, where the session was taking place at that time. Resisting deputies were beaten, and the chairman of the Grozny City Council V. Kutsenko was killed. It was September 6, 1991, that the day of the overthrow of the totalitarian regime and the transition to a democratic legal structure¹ was marked in Chechnya as Independence Day.

It was supposed to legalize Chechnya's independence through a series of legal procedures. The acceptance of citizenship, the election of the president and the parliament were scheduled for October and November. The policy of 'genocide' and 'colonial oppression' of the Chechen people pursued by the 'imperial forces' was condemned, and representatives of only those Soviet republics that had definitely chosen the policy of secession from the USSR were invited to observe the elections.

As a matter of fact, as early as the first half of September 1991 there was a military coup by nationalist and radical forces aimed not so much against the former Communist Party and Soviet nomenklatura as at seceding the Chechen-Ingush republic from Russia. In September, many politicians from Moscow visited Grozny in an attempt to bring the situation under the control of the federal authorities. However, the missions of R. Khasbulatov, M. Poltoranin, G. Burbulis, and A. Rutskoy failed. Upon the report of the latter the Presidium of the Russian Supreme Soviet issued a decree On the Situation in the Chechen-Ingush Republic which played a major role in further escalation of tensions. In the document, the Chechen-Ingush Air Force was named the only legal authority on this

territory, and the 'illegal armed formations', by which the Dudayev structures were meant, were ordered to surrender their weapons by 10 October 1991.

The Executive Committee of UCCHN took the decision of the Russian leadership, which looked like an ultimatum, with a literal disrespect. Mobilization of all males between 15 and 55 years old in Chechnya was announced, and the National Guard was put on alert. By November 1 the National Guard numbered 62,000 men, and the People's Militia more than 90,000.

B.N. Yeltsin shared the strong sentiments of A. V. Rutskoi regarding the need to take emergency measures in relation to CHIR. On October 19 he signed a harsh stream "Appeal to the leaders of the Executive Committee of the National Congress of the Chechen People," in which he warned that in case of non-compliance with federal requirements he would take all measures stipulated by the legislation of the RSFSR "in the interests of normalizing the situation, ensuring the safety of the population and protecting the constitutional order. The elections in Chechnya were declared illegitimate and their results were declared null and void in advance. Nevertheless, on October 27 the elections were held; Ingush and some of the Russian-speaking population did not participate in them. Voting in less than half of the republic's districts. Dudayev received an overwhelming majority of the votes, and became the first Chechen president. The parliament that was elected proved to be practically mono-ethnic. Not only the Russian authorities did not recognize the election results, but also the forces in Chechnya that opposed Dudayev.

November 1991 was a particularly dramatic period in Russian policy in Chechnya, which permanently compounded the earlier mistakes. On November 4, the Russian president ordered the preparation of a decree declaring a state of emergency in the republic. At various stages of its development A. V. Rutskoy, S. M. Shakhrai, R. I. Khasbulatov, V. G. Stepankov, N. V. Fedorov, and V. P. Barannikov participated, with A. F. Dunayev. The text was signed by Yeltsin on November 7. According to the decree, from November 9 to December 9, 1991, a state of emergency was declared in Chechnya.

The Provisional Administration was established as a form of government, its orders and decrees were to be implemented by all governmental and non-governmental organizations. It was planned to involve "additional forces and means of the Interior Ministry and the KGB bodies into the zone of emergency". According to the plan, more than 1,500 people were to take part in the operation against Dudayev. Thus, having realized that the situation had gone too far, the Russian president decided to use force. However, the operation was a technical failure in the first place. On November 8, when it began, the equipment landed at Mozdok airport, while the people were in Beslan (both in North Ossetia). The roads used by the troops from North Ossetia to Chechnya were blocked. (The Khankala airport near Grozny was blocked by several > thousand heavily armed men, and the runways were blocked by heavily laden vehicles. The special forces who had arrived earlier were blocked in the building of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the republic.

Nevertheless, the main reasons for the failure of the attempted armed intervention apparently lay in the political sphere. Yeltsin at the time was not yet able to fully rely on the Russian security forces, which were at the stage of formation and were subordinate to the Soviet president. Gorbachev was resolutely opposed to the use of troops, and gave instructions to the allied 'siloviks' - V. P. Barannikov, E. I. Shaposhnikov and B. V. Bakatin - not to do it. Attempts by Yeltsin, Rutskoi, and Khasbukhov to persuade Gorbachev were unsuccessful. As a result, Yeltsin's decree introducing a state of emergency in Chechnya was effectively blocked.

In Chechnya, the news of the intention to introduce a state of emergency in the republic led to a consolidation of opposition forces around Dudayev. The rumors circulating about an allegedly new deportation of Chechens consolidated Chechen society. The Chechen parliament not only condemned the decree but demanded that the President of the RSFSR withdraw all armed units from the republic's territory within 24 hours. Mass protests continued; the buildings of the Interior Ministry and the Internal Troops regiment stationed in Grozny were blocked. On November 9-10 the leadership of the Chechen Executive Committee threatened to carry out terrorist acts on the territory of Russia and turn Moscow into a "disaster zone. The seriousness of the Chechen declarations was demonstrated by the hijacking of an airplane, which was flying from Mineralnye Vody to Sverdlovsk.

Under these circumstances, the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR held a heated discussion on the constitutionality

of Yeltsin's decree introducing a state of emergency in Chechnya on November 1. And although the resolution passed by the Supreme Soviet contained an "apologetic" formulation for the President and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, the parliament refused to approve the decree, and obliged the Chechens to resolve the conflict by political means, through negotiations with the main political groups, making no exception for the Executive Committee of the UCPN. As an expression of distrust towards the president a paragraph stating that the composition of the "representative delegation" to the negotiations and its powers would be approved by the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. Representatives of various factions spoke in favor of the decree's cancellation for various reasons.

At the same time, the militarization of the Chechen power regime continued. By the edict of December 9, 1991, Dudayev brought all armed units on the territory of the republic under his command, and ordered the creation of a Headquarters of the armed forces "to control units and subunits of the army and units of the people's militia". In November - December the "creeping" seizure of property and weapons of the units of the Soviet Army located in Chechnya continued. By the decree of December 19, 1991, Dudayev revived "the right of citizens of the Chechen Republic to purchase and keep firearms, lost in conditions of the totalitarian system," which was also conditioned by "the state of the sociopolitical situation in the republic."

Nevertheless, on December 3 Dudayev did not receive the independent experts, sent to Grozny by the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR for the purpose of preparation of

materials for negotiations. On December 19, the deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR Yarov asked Dudayev to send his group of experts to Moscow. The tone of the letter indicated that Moscow accepted the general's leadership of the republic. However, the letter was left unanswered, and negotiations did not begin until March 1992.

Presidents of the republics within Russia

In October-December 1991, the process of "improving" federative relations unfolded in other directions. The process of electing the presidents of the republics within Russia, which had begun earlier, continued, but now was not by show of hands, but on the basis of conciliatory resolutions of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. Thus, the presidents of the Mari, Chuvash (both on December 8, 1991), Mordovian (December 14, 1991), and Yakutian-Sakha SSR (December 20, 1991) were elected. As recommended by the Russian Supreme Soviet, elections in Kabardino-Balkaria were postponed to a later date.

On December 22, 1991, elections were held in the new subjects of the Federation created on the basis of the increased status of the national oblasts: in Adygea, Gorno-Altai, Karachaevo-Cherkess and Khakass Republics. These were "inertial steps" to strengthen the sovereignties previously proclaimed, but now they were of a more streamlined nature.

Elections for the president of Tatarstan were held there on June 12, 1991, simultaneously with the all-Russian.

Seventy percent of those voted for Shaimiyev, while only 45 percent voted for Yeltsin. In this case, the leader of Tatarstan initially had the status of "head of the republic", while the Russian leader had only "the highest official", the head of the executive branch. In September 1991 there were riots and rallies in Kazan demanding Tatarstan's independence and on October 24, 1991 the Supreme Council of the Republic adopted a resolution "On the Act of State Independence of the Republic of Tatarstan". In line with the logic of the political leadership in 1990-1991, on December 26, 1991 the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tatarstan approved the Act of State Independence of the Republic of Tatarstan. In December 26, 1991, the Supreme Council of Tatarstan passed a declaration on joining the CIS as a co-member. At that time, the statement of Shaymiyev: "There are no presidents big and small, there are presidents equal" was widespread.

Choice of the reform team and the nature of the course they pursued

During that year alone the national income went down by more than 11%; GDP down by 13%; industrial production by 2.8%; agricultural production by 4.5%; oil and coal production down by 11%; iron and steel production down by 17%; food production by 10%. The gross harvest of grain declined by 24%, and its state procurement by declined 34%. Foreign trade turnover decreased especially sharply, by 37%, with exports falling by 35% and imports by 46%. While the flow of goods to the market was shrinking, the pumping of money into the economy continued and even intensified.

Corporate profits increased by 1.9 times, personal income by 2 times and money supply by 4.4 times.

During the year the consumer price level more than doubled (by 101.2 percent), although a year earlier the price increase had been only 5 percent.

As a result, by the autumn of 1991, the country had completely lost control over financial processes and money circulation, and the disintegration of the monetary system became a reality. Its symptoms were growing dollarization of the economy, barter substitution of commodity-money relations, and administrative restrictions on interregional commodity exchange. Some republican and oblast administrations began introducing real money substitutes (coupons, buyer cards, value chits) and in some cases (Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) stated their intention to introduce full-fledged national currencies. This increased the money supply in circulation and pushed it into Russia, exacerbating the financial situation.

In 1991 the deficit of the state budget of the USSR increased in comparison with the planned by 6 times, and made a huge figure of 20% of GDP (according to foreign estimates – 30%), and the former Union republics actually stopped transferring funds to the all-Union budget. Accordingly, the financing of federal services, foreign policy, the army and intelligence services was almost completely transferred under the aegis of the RSFSR budget.

The foreign exchange situation worsened considerably. The foreign debt increased to 76 billion dollars, and the

internal debt - to 5.6 billion dollars. Gold and foreign currency reserves were sharply reduced, and their reserve was at a record low: in 1989- 1991, the reserves of the Duma amounted to 27.6 billion U.S. dollars, while in 1991, the reserves of the Duma were taken abroad. On January 1, 1992 there was only 289.6 tons of gold left. By the end of October 1991, Vnesheconombank had exhausted its liquid foreign currency resources and had to suspend all foreign payments (for goods and services provided and contributions to international organizations), with the exception of payments for servicing foreign debt.

The disadvantages in production and monetary and financial spheres led to the collapse of the consumer market. Almost all types of goods became scarce. Most cities in the country were covered by the card system. However, even the meager rates defined by the local authorities were not provided with the resources, the supply was not guaranteed, the coupons were not redeemed for months, and the sale of goods on them was nervous, with huge lines. As a result of the paralysis of all links and management systems, the supply, especially of the cities and the army, was practically disrupted. Thus, in January 1992, resources of food grain amounted to about 3 million tons a month, while the country needs more than 5 million tons. This made it obligatory to import about 3 million tons of grain every month, which, as already noted, the Treasury had no money for.

Thus, any reformers in Russia at the end of 1991 had to proceed from a combination of three crises: inflationary (accelerating open inflation with an acute shortage of

goods), payment (acute shortage of foreign exchange resources and undermining the creditworthiness of the country), systemic (loss of state authorities at all levels of the ability to regulate resource flows).

The economic crisis 1991 was aggravated (and in many respects caused) by the acute political struggle between the various centers of power. Especially tough and irreconcilable was the confrontation between Russian and allied state and political institutions. By that time, the loss of control over economic, social, political and interethnic processes in the country had become obvious to all. Only the explanation of the causes of the crisis remained different and varied. The country's leadership, led by Gorbachev, attributed them to the irrepressible sovereign ambitions of the republics, the most active of which, led by Russia, launched an attack on the Soviet center. The Russian leaders clustered around Yeltsin blamed everything on "reactionary imperial forces" and the party-economic nomenklatura, which were unwilling to dismantle the "obsolete economic and political structures" of the USSR.

Each side claimed greater validity for its right to pull the country out of the abyss. A contradiction became evident; the Soviet leadership had the economic and administrative apparatus, but the leaders lacked political authority, and the power mechanisms were weakened. Russia did not have sufficient administrative and economic structures, but the authority of the leaders who rose on a protest wave was clearly higher, and their public rhetoric looked more attractive. Under these conditions, it was impossible to count on effective management of the economy. Therefore, the economic

crisis in the USSR of this period should be viewed primarily as a crisis of power. Radical and rapid changes in the system of power relations between the Soviet and Russian centers began only after the events of August 19-21, 1991.

What were the possible ways and real possibilities of reforming the Russian economy? In 1990-1991, the ineffectiveness of the socialist economy, regulated by administrative methods, was obvious to everyone. It was also generally understood that the "cure" of the existing system was linked to the introduction of market relations into it. However, there were significant differences in the ideas about how to make the transition to the market and what model of its functioning was the most- preferable.

The Chinese and the Polish Model

The "Chinese way" and the "Polish way" are commonly discussed. First of all, attention is paid to the fact that in the first case reforms are carried out gradually, step-by-step, covering quite a long period. In the second, the entry into the market happened quickly, rapidly; the set of measures was so radical and unaccustomed to the population that it was called "*shock therapy*". In fact, the differences were of a deeper, "qualitative" nature.

In contrast to the widely propagandized notion that the socialist economy was a priori inefficient and could not be reformed, and therefore had to be broken, China believed that "there are no un-reformable economies. Its leaders believed in the ability of the ruling stratum to carry out the necessary institutional and structural

changes, taking into account existing economic realities and the mentality of the people associated with them, this was crucial. China was convinced that the introduction of market relations did not necessarily have to be accompanied by a radical overhaul of its political and state institutions. *On the contrary, there was a shared conviction that maintaining political stability reduced the risks in transition.*

Recognizing the achievements of advanced market economies, the Chinese government focused not on copying someone else's experience, not on Westernization, but on a broader use of intermediate, transitional forms of economic management. This was reflected, in particular, in the fact that the capitalist sector was built not instead of, but in parallel with the state, socialist sector, and market regulation was gradually extended to an increasing number of economic entities, regardless of ownership. All this led to the fact that the reforms in China from the very beginning had a solid and healthy social basis, based on a consistent increase in people's living standards. The concept of Chinese reforms was formulated by Deng Xiaoping in December 1978. The gradual and planned implementation of reforms did not mean they were conflict-free. The country still has a high level of unemployment.

The situation in Poland was fundamentally different. The Polish elite regarded their country as part of the Western civilization, the return to which was natural after liberation from Soviet tutelage. There was also more experience of interaction with the Western world. The period of "Soviet-type socialism" in Poland was much

shorter than in the USSR; the preservation and reproduction of the market mentality was fueled by the presence of a noticeable market sector (first of all, in the sphere of services and in agriculture). At the same time, from the end of the 1970s the Polish economy was in a state of protracted and deep crisis, which by the end of the 1980s brought it to a complete collapse. In 1989, as a result of the "velvet revolution," anti-communist forces came to power in the country. The new government was left with a difficult legacy.

The collapse of the economy required urgent measures, which were supported by the West, its financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Structural reforms according to their scenario were the main condition for the provision of new loans and deferrals of payments on loans received earlier, without which the Polish economy could no longer exist. Four major groups of measures had to be carried out in order to support them. These included: 1) the crippling liberalization of prices, incomes and all economic activity; 2) macroeconomic stabilization through a strict monetary policy of suppressing inflation (reducing the budget deficit, the issuing of money, the convertibility of the currency); 3) the realization of urgent systemic economy (review of the government's role in the economy, privatization, and development of market infrastructure); 4) a policy of economic openness (foreign trade liberalization, tariff reductions). These IMF recipes were originally developed for the "third world" countries - with underdeveloped processing sector and raw-material orientation of the economy - and tested on them. *The aim of these policies, however, was not to develop the economies of these countries*

comprehensively, but to improve their ability to repay earlier loans.

In 1990-1991 Poland liberalized its economy, opened its foreign trade and established a private sector. However, the implementation of these measures was accompanied by a steep decline in industrial production, high inflation, and a sharp increase in differentiation of the population's income. The reforms were associated with the name of L. Balcerowicz (at that time minister of finance, acting prime minister of the Polish government), whom E. T. Gaidar called "one of the most outstanding economic reformers of the twentieth century.

As for the functioning of the market economy of the capitalist type, there were also different benchmarks. One of them was based on the ideas of British economist J. Keynes, which he formulated on the basis of his analysis of the world crisis and the "great depression" of the late 20-30s. Keynes came to the conclusion that the capitalist market economy is not self-regulating and that constant government intervention is necessary for its optimal functioning. This applies, above all, to industries that provide all national economic complexes with raw materials and energy resources, and the maintenance of infrastructure. The effectiveness of Keynes's approaches is confirmed by the practice of post-war development in a number of European countries (Germany, France, etc.), where Keynesian and dirigiste ideas are shared by many economists to this day.

Liberalism

Proponents of another approach - liberalism - believe that economic freedom, based on competition, flexibility and dynamism of all economic institutions act as a direct productive force, i.e. directly determines economic efficiency. In the 1970s, the ideology of radical neoliberalism or liberal-monetarism took shape. Monetarism assumes the use of finance as the main lever to regulate the economy. The emergence of this doctrine and the certain authority it gained were related to the crisis situation in the world economy in the 1970s, as well as the emergence of crisis phenomena in the socialist economic system. The global wave of liberalization and privatization that began at that time (the most famous examples are Thatcherism and Reaganomics) allowed the leading countries to overcome dangerous inflation and recession. This somewhat weakened the position of Keynesianism and contributed to the expansion of the ideology of liberalism. Researchers believe that in its most extreme forms it established itself in such international financial organizations as the IMF and the World Bank.

What were Russia's real choices? Obviously, the evolutionary, gradualist path of reform would have been preferable to the chaotic revolutionary breakdown, always accompanied by high social costs. In this respect, the "Chinese way" deserved attention. However, it was already unacceptable to Russia for a number of reasons. China initially focused on economic transformation, the need for state and political reform was not even discussed, and socialist ideology was not questioned either. The state was the main conductor of

the policy on the introduction and development of market relations, defining and controlling their forms, scope and pace of implementation. While the motives of the beginning of reforms were associated with an extremely low standard of living and backwardness of the Chinese economy, even in comparison with average developed countries, there was no economic crisis (neither reduction of production, nor decline in living standards).

In the USSR, the situation was fundamentally different. Here the economic transformation in the market direction was preceded by a radical reform of the political system, which weakened the state, accompanied by a complete change of ideological guidelines. The intense political struggle between different parts of the elite led to the fact that by the fall of 1991 the old Union state was already broken, and the creation of the Russian state was only in its initial stage.

The period of September-December 1991 is characterized by extreme instability and uncertainty in the sphere of state and political development. The former structures of state administration (the CPSU, the Union agencies) were liquidated or undermined, and the Soviets began to be sidelined. New institutions were urgently created: The Presidential Administration, the institutions of heads of administration of the subjects of the Federation, presidential representatives, the mayors. The mechanism of the proclaimed system of separation of powers was not worked out politically nor legally. The crisis of intra-federalism in Russia also exacerbated, and confederal-ism was looming over the country.

The future of relations between the RSFSR and the

former Soviet republics, which had by then declared themselves sovereign states, was no clearer. As late as the end of November 1991, there was no unanimity among the leaders as to which union they would be part of. This left one more problem unresolved: What were the territorial boundaries of future economic transformations?

Although many participated in the destruction of the "empire", no one talked about autarchy, about independent economic development. It was at the request of the sovereign republics that the start of reforms in the RSFSR was postponed until January 2, 1992. At the same time, the absence of a worked-out Economic Treaty made the behavior of the nearest neighbors unpredictable. After the actual and legal liquidation of the USSR, all of them continued to be in a still single "union", ruble zone, which allowed them to "adjust" at their discretion monetary and financial activities of Russia, significantly reducing their effectiveness, or even simply frustrate them. To this should be added the problem of borders, which overnight turned from administrative to state borders. Without customs and border control systems, they actually turned out to be transparent, which caused Russia significant economic damage and created many other problems.

Thus, the weakness of the state and the crisis state of the economy made a gradual and controlled transition to market relations in Russia in the fall of 1991 almost impossible. At that time the Russian leadership no longer had a choice, the propaganda of liberalism became economically forced and politically unvarying.

Preserving at least a relative sociopolitical stability, and consequently the survival of the Russian authorities, it was imperative to prevent, at all costs, mass discontent (with unpredictable consequences) with the food supply crisis at the turn of 1991-1992.

After the dissolution of the USSR and the Soviet structures, the population would inevitably address all their complaints to the Russian leadership. The crisis could be overcome only through purchasing food abroad, which had no funds and required borrowing. Borrowing was to be carried out from the IMF, which conditioned the provision of money by carrying out economic transformations according to its "recipes", reminiscent of those previously "prescribed" to Poland. It was not by chance that it was this country that Y. T. Gaidar considered this country "as a reference point, which makes it possible to identify and analyze the problems which Russia will have to face in the course of market transformations".

The peculiarity of Russian transformations in the 1990s consisted in the fact that the formation of a new system of state power, including "a strong executive vertical") took place simultaneously with radical economic reforms. The political situation and the state of the social sphere in autumn 1991 demanded reforms, but this would have inevitably violated the generally accepted logic of the transition to the market economy: denationalization, privatization of property was to be preceded by price liberalization and trade liberalization. In Russian reality it was the opposite: market relations in trade and financial sphere began to establish before the privatization of state property, i.e. before the emergence

of the main subject of market relations ~ the owner, (primarily in the production sphere) with clearly defined rights and obligations. Hence the extraordinary spontaneity of economic processes, and the weak control over the initiated reforms.

The lack of a developed legal and regulatory framework and the weakness of state structures led to the fact that huge segments of the national economy were forced into the "shadow" and (or) were largely criminalized. This, in turn, had an increasing impact on the political sphere. This complicated both the formation of a new system of power and the management of economic transformations. *As a result, Russia implemented a version of reforms, different from both Chinese and Polish, which some call "shock without therapy".* rapid and radical changes in economic life took place without any visible improvement of the economic organism.

After August 1991, the question of forming a new Cabinet of Ministers and searching for a new prime minister became acute in the RSFSR. I.S. Silayev and his government were primarily solving not an economic but a political problem: they were fighting for Russian sovereignty. In the fall of 1991, however, in order to lead the country out of crisis, a truly "working government" was required, which did not prove easy to establish. The distrust of the Soviet Union deprived B. N. Yeltsin, so that he could not use its managers: all of them were regarded as "Gorbachevites". The arising disagreements in "his" entourage did not allow to appoint M.A. Bocharov (Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council of Russia), E.F. Saburov (Minister of Economy of the RSFSR), G.A. Yavlinsky (the most popular, according to

Yeltsin, economist at the time). Among the possible candidates for this post, Yu. A. Ryzhov, Yu. V. Skokov, A. M. Emelianov, S. N. Fedorov, M. N. Poltoranin were considered, who, however, refused for various reasons.

The failure to choose a candidate for premiership in the traditional way forced Yeltsin to turn to other ways to solve this problem. A new proposal came from the State Secretary of the RSFSR G. E. Burbulis, who introduced to the President the economist E. T. Gaidar, who was already well-known but not directly involved in the political battles of 1990-1991. In 1994 B.N. Yeltsin justified his choice as follows: "Gaidar, first of all, struck me with his confidence. He is a very independent person. It was obvious that he would not wiggle. It was important not only not to conceal anything from me, but also not to try to hide anything. Gaidar knew how to speak simply, and this, too, played a role. Sooner or later he would have to talk to his opponents, not me. He knows how to infect with his thoughts, and the interlocutor clearly begins to see the path to be passed. And, finally, the last two decisive factors. Gaidar's scientific concept coincided with my inner determination to pass the painful section of the road quickly. "I could not make people wait again, delay the main events for years. Resolved - we must go!"

The words we have highlighted also seem to have a key meaning in explaining the actions of Gaidar's team in the autumn of 1991. In 1993, one of its members admitted: "Our team does not pretend to the role of initiators nor customers of social policy. The customer is Yeltsin. We acted as firefighters - to save the economy and to save Yeltsin's power. "

Why did Gaidar's concept coincide with the president's "inner feelings"? Apparently, there were reasons for this.

✓ First, the destruction of the Soviet Union structures and Russia's unwillingness to take over their governing functions led him to believe that only the market can put everything in its place. This was in line with the views of Gaidar's confederates who had studied the "exit from socialism" in Eastern Europe and came to the conclusion that the policy of liberalism and the free market were the only levers with which it was possible to move from the ruined planned economy to a market economy.

✓ Secondly, after August 1991, there was no clarity about the space of possible reforms. According to a number of influential politicians, it was only possible to speak about reforms unconditionally in relation to the Russian territory. Market economists, working under Gaidar and Burbulis, justified the possibility of successful reforms only if Russia carried them out in isolation. In this light, the course towards the final disintegration of the USSR seemed quite logical, and the struggle of Russian leaders against the Soviet Center in 1990-1991 was understandable.

✓ Third, the composition of the core team of reformers - young, non-political, non-career managers - allowed the president to concentrate in his hands the entirety of executive power and act as the supreme arbiter without fear of competition. At the same time, he was able to distance himself from the government's erroneous and unpopular measures. The "young reformers" themselves, as professionals, were given a unique chance to be direct participants in one of the greatest socio-economic transformations of the 20th century. Under the "guise" of a "charismatic" president, they

sought to make a breakthrough toward new social relations that the democratic movement of the USSR in 1985-1991 had been inspired by.

The concretization of the Russian leadership's new political and economic line began immediately after the August 19-21 crisis. In early September, at the state dacha in Arkhangelskoye (near Moscow), on the initiative of G. E. Burbulis, E. T. Gaidar, V. M. Mashits, A. A. Nechaev, A. A. Golovkov, K. G. Kagalovsky, and A. P. Vavilov began working on the strategy and tactics of the government; later they were joined by E. G. Yasin and L. M. Grigoryev., A. B. Chubais, V. I. Danilov-Danilyan, P. O. Aven, B. G. Saltykov, S. Yu. Glazyev, M. N. Poltoranin, V. A. Makharadze, A. V. Kozyrev, N. V. Fedorov, S. M. Shakh-ray all participated in the discussion and preparation of materials in various forms.

The ideology of future transformations was reflected in two conceptual documents. The first one was titled *"Russia's Strategy in the Transition Period"*. (also known as the "Burbulis Memorandum"), the second - *"Russia's Near-Term Economic Prospects"*.

The authors of the "Strategy" believed that the main question in the autumn of 1991 is not the sequence of reforms, but quite another - whether to reform the Russian economy, preserving *"the rudiments of the union state, integrated economy, and hence the rudiments of the corresponding economic policy, or to implement a strategy for the speedy achievement of Russia's economic independence and independent economic reforms"*.

The concept developers argued that before August-91 there was an intermediate union of republican elites, which however, after August, objective contradictions between Russia and the other republics came to the fore. These contradictions were associated with different scales of economies, differences in resource potentials, and unequal perspectives of historical development, as well as different "political weight" in the eyes of the international community.

The "Strategy" set a principled course towards economic independence with a "soft" political union. From it flowed the need to create an independent Russian state with all its attributes, including its own currency, customs and border services. *"Russia's near-term economic prospects"* concretized these guidelines in relation to its economic policy.

The prospects saw, first, the attainment of full-fledged economic independence and independent implementation of reforms which other republics could join (or not). Secondly, Russia would assume responsibility for the USSR's foreign debts, which would enable it to lay claim to the Union's gold reserves, property abroad and foreign debts to the Union. In so doing, *Russia became a natural partner of Western countries* and international financial institutions, whose assistance was sorely needed.

Russia's attractiveness to the West was associated with its large domestic market and rich export potential, which were supposed to be reoriented toward developed countries. Thirdly, along with the declaration of state property on Russian territory, it was announced that

Russia would retain control over the financial sector as long as the ruble zone existed. The document fixed the need to switch to world prices in inter-republican settlements. Finally, it was in the "Economic Prospects" that the Gaidarites identified the financial and monetary sphere as the primary link in the stabilization and reform efforts.

The documents that followed "Strategy" and "Prospects" defined the main directions of the post-August political course. Its analysis shows that in their practical activities Russian leaders were guided by the ideas formulated in these two conceptual documents.

The beginning of the transition to the policy of reforms is connected with the decisions of the V.th Congress of People's Deputies of Russia. On October 28, 1991, Boris Yeltsin addressed the citizens of the Russian Federation from the rostrum. Noting that "the field for reforms has been cleared", he called for a "major reformist breakthrough" in the economy. For this purpose it was proposed: 1) one-time introduction of free prices, which had to "start" the mechanism of market competition and eliminate commodity deficit; 2) liberalization of trade, designed to create a market infrastructure and increase commodity circulation; 3) privatization of housing, state industrial, commercial and other enterprises, aimed at creating as many market subjects and economic motives of activity as possible.

From Yeltsin's speech it was clear that Russia proceeded to transform on its own, without coordination with other republics. As Ye.T. Gaidar rightly pointed out, the speech summarized only the "outlines of the

program of reforms”.

Acknowledging the painfulness of the proposed measures, the president said that only a government of people's trust consisting not of politicians, but of professionals, could carry them out. Trying to support them with his authority, he offered to personally head the government, to which the congress gave its consent. Yeltsin asked the deputies to make a number of important changes in the system of higher state power in Russia, and the Congress also met him halfway. The resolution *"On the organization of executive power during a period of radical economic reform"* granted the president the right to reorganize the structure of the higher executive branch and resolve personnel issues in its system. Another resolution *"On Legal Support of Economic Reform"* gave him the right to issue decrees having the force of law. Whereas if the laws currently in effect in the RSFSR conflicted with them, the edicts took precedence over the laws.

In early November, Yeltsin, who headed the government of reforms, began practical preparations for their implementation. On November 5, a decree was signed appointing G. E. Burbulis as First Deputy Prime Minister, E. T. Gaidar as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance, and A. N. Shokhin as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labor and Social Security. Further selection of the "economic" ministers and their deputies was carried out with the participation of all three Vice Prime Ministers mostly on the basis of Gaidar's "Arkhangelsk" team.

On November 15, after the formation of the new

government of the RSFSR, Yeltsin signed a package of ten presidential decrees and government orders, which outlined the specific steps towards a market economy. The process of merging Russian administrative bodies with the all-union ones began: the functions of the 88 ministries and departments of the USSR were delegated to the appropriate ministries in Russia, while the number of those ministries (41) was reduced. Instead of 129 union and Russian structures it was supposed to form only 20, number of officials being reduced more than two times, which meant the largest administrative reorganization. Among the first to be taken under control was the USSR Gosplan, the next step was the merger of the Ministries of Finance of the Union and Russia, and the consolidation of their budgets. At the end of November 1991, Russia undertook the obligations on the debts of the USSR and increased the efforts to convince the Western leaders to provide it with large-scale assistance.

The government's new course was reflected in the basic parameters of the 1992 budget. Allocations for arms procurement were reduced by 7.5 times; centralized capital investments by 1.5 times; price subsidies by almost 3 times. Expenditures in the agricultural sector and social sphere were reduced. These "draconian measures," according to Gaidar, "gave a chance" to avoid hyperinflation and "send an impetus to start the engine of a market economy.

By January 1992, when the transformations began, no program for the transition to a market economy as a complex system of stage-by-stage measures, aimed at achieving a certain economic and social result, had been

created in Russia. There was only an idea of a set of necessary economic instruments to make the market mechanisms work. E. T. Gaidar and the members of his government considered their activities exclusively as a strategic one, aimed at changing the historical vector of the country's development and carrying out systemic transformation within it. That is why understanding and loyalty to the chosen course were valued above the skills of professional management. Nevertheless, the draft document titled "*The Russian Government's Program of Deepening Economic Reforms*" was created, and in July 1992 it was submitted to the Supreme Soviet of Russia.

It was quite a large (336 pages) document full of calculations and presented the reformers' vision of the stages of transformation of the national economy.

✓ The first stage was the crisis development (1992-1993). *Liberalization and financial stabilization* were considered here as the main priorities of this stage. It was supposedly not only to put the financial sector in order, but also to start privatization, structural reorganization in industry, reform in agrarian sector, and large-scale transformation of the social sphere. It was also supposed to create the main prerequisites for overcoming the crisis and establishing a market economy.

✓ The second stage, i.e. the *restoration of the national economy* (the text implied that it would last from 1994 to 1995), was supposed to prioritize the creation and consolidation of institutions facilitating the development of entrepreneurship and competition. It was planned to carry out mass privatization, achieve effective functioning of the financial market, and generally reform the social sphere. By the end of this stage the public

sector's share in production was not to exceed 40 percent (no more than 10 percent in trade), and the plan was to revive production activity and achieve pre-crisis levels of GDP.

✓ At the third stage, which according to the logic of the document was to come after 1995, *economic growth of at least 3-4% per year* was predicted; the rate of exports of products with a high degree of readiness, the rate of accumulation of GDP - not less than 15%. The document is of exceptional interest from the point of view of assessing the government's ability to predict the consequences of its actions.

Chapter X.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION. 1992-2004

§ 1. The beginning of the transition to a new society. 1992

Anti-crisis measures and market transformations

The history of modern Russia begins at the end of December 1991. ... "But babies are not born handsome".

In the last days of 1991, there appeared a presidential

decree approving the main provisions of the privatization program, a temporary document, which was in force until the Supreme Soviet adopted a corresponding state program. On January 29, 1992, its development was followed by an important decree that approved the normative documents regulating the procedure of the main privatization procedures: tenders and auctions, payment procedures, etc. They formulated the principles, ideology and technology of privatization, which remained in force until 1996. In February-March 1992, on the basis of these documents, "small-scale privatization" gained momentum (trade, public catering and service enterprises). By June almost 10 thousand objects of the state and municipal property had been privatized and applications for 30 thousand objects had been filed.

In the spring of 1992, there were attempts to comprehend the first results of the new economic course, which looked rather contradictory. The liberalization of the ruble led to a ruble appreciation that differed greatly from government forecasts. The initial price hike in January was accompanied by their relative stabilization in February, but in March-May consumer prices of goods almost doubled, and in summer this process was not stopped instead of the originally promised, a two or threefold increase in prices: for many basic commodities they increased 10-12 times (by the end of the year at 36). A sharp decrease in retail turnover (in the first quarter of the year by an average of 50% over the same period in 1991 testified to a sharp decrease in the purchasing power of the Russian population, which was nothing similar to what it was.

The situation with the money incomes of the citizens was

unfavorable as well. Liberalization of prices allowed to remove the "monetary overhang" - the accumulated surplus of money over goods by 1991. This, however, led to the fact that into the fire of inflation burned many years of savings of the population. Most of them were relatively small deposits of not the richest citizens. The negative public resonance did not attract the attention of the authorities to this acute problem. The situation of pensioners and workers of budgetary organizations worsened. The differentiation of the population according to the level of income increased. At the beginning of the reforms it was not possible to prevent a cash crisis. The inflation rate was so high that the authorities did not have enough time to print the necessary amount of money.

As a result, *state arrears* in the payment of wages, pensions and benefits were constantly growing (40 billion rubles as of April 1, 1992, and 150 billion by June 1), which was an additional factor in growing social tensions. According to opinion polls, about a half of the country's population was much worse off and more than a quarter - slightly worse off than in December 1991. Only every eleventh respondent noted some improvement, 9%.

The situation in the sphere of material production was not any more optimistic. Industry saw a reduction in the volume of output and a significant rise in the price of goods. As a result of the termination of the financing by the state of the unprofitable enterprises, in the spring of 1992, the payment crisis became more and more acute. Mutual debts of enterprises sharply increased, and the deficit of means of payment intensified. The mutual

debts were snowballing: by the end of January they amounted to 140 billion rubles, by the end of February - 390 billion rubles, by the end of March - 780 billion rubles, which corresponded to about 40% of the industrial output (in June the amount reached 2 trillion rubles). A purely "market" solution of the problem demanded the bankruptcy of the insolvent payers, however its scale made the state intervention inevitable.

The situation in the agricultural sector was not easy. The government placed its bets on the forced development of farming and actively lobbied for the introduction of the free purchase and sale of land. A campaign to discredit the kolkhoz-sovkhoz system (kolkhoz, divide profits, sovkhoz, is paid a wage), was launched in the mass media. The novelties should have been spurred-on by the start of the re-registration of farms, during which the peasants had to make a new choice as to which production - collective or individual - they would tie their future to. As a result of the conducted course the village as a whole lost: "unpromising", often subsidized, collective and state farms were significantly reduced the scale of financial support, although in the near future they inevitably remained the main suppliers of food and raw materials for food and light industry. At the same time, the farmer's movement received mainly only moral support: the issues of its financial, logistical and legal support were not resolved.

The government's focus was almost exclusively on strategic and macroeconomic issues. First of all, it was supposed to restore the lost control over the state finances. A tough budget policy was pursued, aimed at eliminating the state budget deficit, which by the end of

1991 had reached a huge amount; 20% of GDP. This policy included drastic spending cuts, which included the cost of social sectors (municipal, health care, education, science, culture), armaments procurement, centralized investments, budgetary subsidies and subsidies to territories and enterprises. A sharp reduction of public spending had led to the fact that in January 1992, the budget deficit was replaced by a surplus of 5.1%; in February, the budget deficit was 2.7%; in March, 2.3%; and in April, the surplus of 4.4% was registered again. The reformers noted as positive the fact that the state budget deficit did not exceed 0.5% of GDP during the five months since the beginning of liberalization.

The tight fiscal policy led to a reduction in the inflation rate. After a surge in January 1992, its level in February already made 38.3%, in March - 30%, in April - 22% and in May - 12%. The volume of production declined at a high rate, but quite acceptable, according to the government. As compared with December 1991, in January 1992, GDP fell by 3.9%; in February - 6.9%; in March - 7.2%; in April - 11.7%.

However, the formal improvement of macroeconomic indicators left unanswered pressing questions: how could the bulk of the population survive (in the situation of loss of savings and a sharp drop in incomes), and how would industrial and agricultural enterprises, about half of which could not do without the state budget "injections", function under the new conditions? Theoretically, it was clear that in the "future" everything must change, and the country's economy will experience dynamic growth. But it was not easy to say when it would happen and which economic sectors would

become a real support of the movement to a new social and economic order.

The transformations of the first months of 1992 resulted in the appearance of a great number of people dissatisfied with their results. Therefore, the president and the government were faced with the problem of determining the social base that would allow them to move towards the market in the spring of that year. After August 1991, a certain coalition of forces emerged that advocated accelerated movement toward the market. The social groups interested in this can be divided into three parts.

✓ The first group consists of those who formed the basis of the mass "protest" anti-totalitarian and anti-nomenklatura democratic movement of 1988-1991, under the slogan "Democracy and Market". These were mostly intellectuals, engineers, managers, and civil servants who hoped to quickly realize their hopes after the "putsch" failed.

✓ The second group could include those elite and near-elite strata who in 1987-1991 had already joined the semi-officially encouraged "from above" market relations through currency and financial, export-import, and other commercial operations. They were joined by organizers of commerce at various levels and by businessmen connected to them, who better than others saw the prospects open to them in the event of the emergence of a free market and the elimination of "socialist" restrictions.

✓ The third group often included industrial managers, directors of enterprises and related structures. Their "market prospects" were defined by expanding opportunities to dispose of material and financial

resources, which formally remained state-owned.

The "directors' corps" also counted on active participation in privatization, the inevitability of which was becoming clear. At the same time, this group was far from homogeneous. It was the managers of the raw materials industry, whose products were in guaranteed demand, who were more interested in the liberalization of economic relations. Especially attractive for them was the independent access to foreign markets, where gas, oil and other resources were sold at prices much higher than domestic, which greatly facilitated adaptation to the new economic conditions and reduced dependence on the state budget. The position of the leaders of the processing industry, many of whose enterprises could exist only with the financial support of the state, was different. They advocated a gradual entry of the country into the market and active regulation of this process by the government, relying on its assistance through budgetary sources.

It should be noted that although the first and third named groups were generally focused on market transformations, their positions and interests were potentially conflicting. The mass protest movement stood for the removal of the party-state and economic nomenclature from power, opposing the radical-democratic version of reforms. In many respects, the directorial corps itself was part of the existing system, with interwoven political and economic ties. Therefore, Soviet economic managers advocated a smoother social transformation that would allow them to retain or capitalize on advantages already "won". These differences were muted at the beginning of the reforms.

But later, the government and the president would still have to choose between these two orientations.

The problem of broad public support for the initiated reforms was significantly complicated by the fact that before they began in 1992, the authorities did almost no work on moral and psychological preparation of the population for the inevitably painful reforms. Nobody explained what they would consist in, what the role of the main social groups in them would be, and how the situation of each group might change. In 1990-1991, there was no explanation as to what these reforms would consist of. In contrast to the Soviet leaders, the Russian leadership insisted that necessary measures could be implemented without reducing living standards, and the president even assured them that he would "go to the rails" if that were to happen. Hence there are overstated expectations, hopes only for positive changes, and readiness, at best, for a moderate and sacrificial course of changes, but not for their radical variant.

It was only in late October 1991, at the 5th Congress of People's Deputies of the RSFSR, that the President spoke openly about the difficulties that the population would have to go through, simultaneously with the announcement of the beginning of reforms. Describing the one-time transition to the market prices as "a hard, forced, but necessary measure", he again said that "everyone will be worse off in about half a year, then prices will go down, the consumer market will be filled with goods. And by the fall of 1992. As I had promised before the elections, the economy would stabilize and people's lives would gradually improve. Further on, the

citizens were informed that "liberalization of prices" would be accompanied by the measures on social protection of the population. Only against this background were the rather cautious warnings that "we will not be able to protect everyone's standard of living at the first stage of reforms" and that "we will not have an easy time". It was the "support and faith" (rather than conscious participation) that B.N. Yeltsin considered the necessary conditions for the success of reform. In his New Year address he spoke again about a difficult period of 6-8 months, and confirmed that by the end of 1992 life would begin to improve.

The "government of reforms" was no more verbose. The "unpopularity" of the proposed measures was discussed already at the first meeting between E. T. Gaidar and B. N. Yeltsin. Yeltsin in late October 1991. On the eve of the Fifth Congress. The future vice-premier straightforwardly told the president that he himself would dismiss the first reformist government in a few months' time. The understanding of the inevitable escalation of the conflict potential was illustrated by the signing on November 15, 1991, of the presidential Decree "On Social Partnership" that created a tripartite Commission for the Regulation of Social and Labor Relations. It was to include representatives of the state, entrepreneurs, and trade unions.

The explanations of what was really expected in the country in the next few months were very general and limited. Communist, socialist, and patriotic forces were not taken into account. Representatives of the traditional economic and managerial elite were not involved as "bearers of the old stereotypes of economic thinking". E.

T. Gaidar himself explained his dislike of public speeches by the absence of attractive arguments, in favor of the policy pursued by the government and admitted that "the inability to tell people the truth comes with power". It is here that the accuracy of the Kantian principle is well understood; 'Everything you say must be true, but it does not follow from this that you must tell the whole truth'.

All of this led to a dramatic decrease in political support for the "government of reformers" by the spring of 1992. Together with the President, it relied only on the forces which had already benefited from the reforms and had a vested interest in their continuation. They were opposed by the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet of Russia, which, as a representative body reflecting a wide range of voters' interests, were increasingly pressured by those who were dissatisfied with the reforms.

In addition to the traditional opponents from the left-patriotic camp, the opponents included those who had previously fervently advocated market reforms or were objectively interested in their successful promotion. This is the essence of the "paradox" to which some authors point: *The "democratic" Congress of People's Deputies, which had generally approved the government's policy in October 1991, faced with its first results, had already become "conservative" by April 1992.*

The VI Congress of People's Deputies of Russia (April 1992) was crucial in changing the economic course and creating a new configuration of pro-reform forces. At it, the activities of the government were sharply criticized.

The deputies adopted a resolution, which contained an unpleasant evaluation of the work of the team of "professionals": "To recognize the course of the economic reform as unsatisfactory in the sphere of social protection of citizens, investment, industrial and agrarian policy, comprehensiveness of the measures performed". The president was offered to prepare and submit to the Supreme Soviet within a month a draft law on the government and, most importantly, a new candidacy for its head.

A crisis erupted, when the Gaidar team collectively resigned. The conflict was resolved with the active participation of the head of government, the president. He managed to convince the congress to allow the Cabinet to work quietly until December 1992, when, he hoped, some positive results of the policy could be seen. The consent of the deputies had to be paid for with a series of important concessions, which made significant adjustments to economic policy and determined the fate of Russian reforms for many years. (What were these concessions? At this stage left unanswered.)

Some researchers and practitioners believe that the first stage of reforms in Russia lasted from November 1991 to April 1992. The main distinguishing feature of the stage - the transition to the regulation of the economy exclusively by financial, monetary levers. In our opinion, *the comparison of the liberal "market assault" of 1992 and the Bolshevik "Red Guards and gaska on capital" of the winter - spring of 1918 is not without grounds. In both cases, the course pursued was based on the catastrophic state of the national economy and the forced implementation of reforms on the basis of a*

certain political and ideological course. Resources had been exhausted, there followed a policy of compromise with the old economic and administrative strata. However, a temporary "rollback" was carried out in order to regroup forces and ensure further movement towards the original goal. Therefore, some researchers consider it possible to call the course pursued in Russia in the 1990s "Market Bolshevism".

In the Russian Federation the compromise between the market liberals and the "old" economic elite began to take shape in the spring - summer of 1992. It found expression in the softening of monetary policy and the restoration of concessional lending to enterprises, as well as in the attraction to the government of representatives of the director corps. Already in May 1992, under the influence of the lobby groups, the allocation of state funds to some groups of enterprises began again, albeit so far not extensively. V. S. Chernomyrdin, V. G. Shumeiko, G. S. Khizha were appointed Deputy Prime Ministers with the aim to represent the interests of various sectors of the national industry in the Government. However, the appointment of A. V. Chubais, who by that time had already acquired a reputation of one of the *toughest market liberals*, as the Vice Prime Minister in June 1994 was no less symbolic. As a result, the President as the head of the government was greatly expanding the limits of the political and economic maneuvering that was so necessary in those circumstances.

In his program work *"The State and Evolution"* (1995), Ye. T. Gaidar admitted that in the spring of 1992 the reformers assumed that "economically viable solutions

were hardly achievable. In the long term, economically optimal may be what is now as socially acceptable as possible". At that stage, the main revolutionary changes were to take place in the sphere of property relations. Therefore, the emphasis was placed on "creating privatization coalitions" to initiate a mass privatization process from below, "to integrate the interests of those social groups who can paralyze it if they do not see their place in it (labor collectives, heads of enterprises, regional authorities). Under the influence of "industrialists", a new variant of privatization was introduced into the government program, which was not the most optimal in the opinion of the "reformers", allowing "labor collectives" to buy 51% of shares in their enterprises at the residual value. In practice, it means fixing the benefits for the administrations of the enterprises being privatized, and it is not accidental that later on about 70% of the enterprises were privatized according to this scheme.

The formation of the coalition (or union) of "liberal market" and the "old" economic and managerial elite took place gradually, during the second half of 1992. It was accompanied by rather sharp contradictions. In June, a "Civic Union" political bloc emerged. It included the Democratic Party of Russia (the most massive in Demrossia, leader N. I. Travkin), the People's Party "Free Russia" (leader Vice President A. V. Rutskoy), and the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (leader A. I. Volsky).

The president and the government could not ignore the bloc: according to some estimates, its member

organizations could control up to 40% of the votes at the congresses of people's deputies and had well-established ties with the economic as well as regional leaders. In addition, the Civic Union maintained close contacts with the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, claiming to represent the interests of a very broad and diverse social group. On the one hand, it asserted itself as a centrist organization devoid of extremes, while on the other, it sharply opposed Gaidar's macroeconomic course and insisted on the need to develop a state industrial policy which would alleviate the hardships of the crisis and stimulate structural reorganization in the producing industries.

Fearing the open social explosion inevitable if Gaidar's financial stabilization policy was consistently pursued (in this case almost half of the enterprises would have gone bankrupt as unprofitable and low-profit), and also feeling pressure from the forces behind the Civil Union, Boris Yeltsin made significant changes in the government course.

In June-August 1992, the Government and the Central Bank took measures to obtain additional credit for industries and regions (agriculture, coal mining and some other industries, the northern regions); to defer and partially repay from the state budget the previously issued loans; to introduce new tax and customs privileges and to credit companies at extremely low interest rates. In September and October the mutual offsetting of debts of the enterprises was performed which sharply increased their working capital and the total volume of the money supply. All these measures were fundamentally contrary to the ideology of the

Russian "monetarists", but December 1 was approaching, when the VJI Congress of People's Deputies was to analyze the performance of the government and consider the issue of extending additional powers to the President. And although the head of the government had already made some irreverent remarks about the parliament and the congress, Yeltsin could not completely ignore them at that time.

In addition, he conducted intensive consultations with the Civic Union throughout November 1992, during which Yeltsin affirmed the closeness of the positions of the Union and the government, expressed his readiness to take its opinion into account when updating the composition of the government, and removed from his entourage the figures that most irritated the opposition (the head of Ostankino Ye. Yakovlev, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Press and Information, Poltoranin, the Secretary of State of the Russian Federation, V. V.E. Burbulis, whose position was eliminated altogether). On Yeltsin's instructions, Gaidar met several times with the leaders of the "industrialists," as a result of which a compromise economic program was agreed upon, which was subsequently presented to the Congress.

Leaving aside for the time being the complex political twists and turns that preceded and accompanied the Congress of People's Deputies of Russia, we should note that it initially recognized the government's unsatisfactory performance in implementing economic reform. Then he stated that the forms and methods of its implementation did not meet the interests of the majority

of citizens and led to the negative socio-economic consequences. He rejected the candidacy of Yeltsin's nominee for prime minister, as well as his proposals to amend the Constitution, which reserved to him the right to form the government and issue acts of an essentially legislative nature.

However, as a result of the political crisis, the Congress made concessions, retaining almost all of the "temporary" powers that had been given to the president the year before. In his turn, Yeltsin had to take into account the opinion of the deputies. As an example of the compromise, he proposed not one but five candidates for the premiership - four of whom represented the director's corps - so that the congress could vote in a soft ratings-based (i.e. not directly binding) manner. V. Skokov received the greatest support ("for" - 637, "against" - 254, "abstained" - 25), followed by V. S. Chernomyrdin (621 - 280 - 24), and only then - E. T. Gaidar (400 - 492 - 33). On the surface, it seemed that everything worked out in favor of appointing Y. V. Skokov as Prime Minister - a director of a defense enterprise, a man from Boris Yeltsin's inner circle. Yeltsin, whose loyalty and high business qualities were rated rather high (Yeltsin: "Skokov is a real "shadow" prime minister, whom I always kind of had in mind"). However, the president rejected this candidate, citing the fact that his name was associated with the military-industrial complex.

Later on he openly admitted that "Skokov's general political line, especially concerning the economy, is very different from mine and from the position of Gaidar or that of Burbulis. As a politician, Yeltsin could not help but

be embarrassed by the fact that Skokov enjoyed authority among the "old" economic and political managers, but more importantly, had close ties with interest groups that were disadvantaged as a result of the "market assault" in 1992 and sought to correct "macroeconomic kinks".

B. S. Chernomyrdin looked more preferable. He was also firmly linked to the former economic elite, but at the same time he was able to put the country's gas industry on a market footing and fully appreciate the benefits that came with this. Chernomyrdin had time to work in Gaidar's government and, as Yeltsin wrote, "understood the logic of actions not from the outside but from the inside. His appointment as premier allowed the president to dismiss one more reproach of the opposition: it accused the "young reformers" of not knowing the real economy and industry. Apparently, this was also due to the understanding that the country's economy is largely dependent on the fuel and energy complex, and that this situation is unlikely to change soon. As a representative of 'directors-entrepreneurs', Chernomyrdin was more capable of acting as a consolidation center for centrist forces interested in stabilization. In this sense, he was the most acceptable compromise figure, which was confirmed by the congressional vote, when he was proposed by the president for the premiership: 721 deputies voted for Chernomyrdin, 172 voted against.

The head of government's complete political and legal dependence on the president predetermined his loyalty to the highest state official (he, not the premier, selected and appointed ministers; their authority in the lawmaking sphere was also incomparable). Yeltsin later praised

Chernomyrdin's human qualities: "He proved to be truly reliable. He did not let us down in any critical situation. At the same time, there was every reason to believe that the focus of the gas premier's attention would be, above all, on the problems of survival and development of the industries he was closest to (gas, oil, and energy). However, the active market liberals of Gaidar's call remained in the government in key positions: B.G. Fedorov held the post of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, A.B. Chubais continued to be Deputy Prime Minister responsible for privatization, and A.N. Shokhin remained Deputy Prime Minister as well. This personnel composition of the highest executive structures reflected one of the characteristic features of the new Russia: the merging of power, administration, and business. This "model" was also reproduced at lower levels of government. On this basis, some economists and sociologists believe that the main subjects of the reforms were the nomenklatura of the second and third "echelons", as well as the old and new officialdom.

Statistical indicators of the results of 1992 did not satisfy - albeit for different reasons - none of the political forces. Prices for food products increased 26-fold; real income of the population was only 44% of the level of the beginning of the year, the share of family expenditures for food on average exceeded 60%. Direct losses of the population on deposits amounted to about 500 billion rubles. In terms of national income production, the country was pushed back to 1976 indicators. As for the level of consumption, it was back to the mid-1960s. Contrary to forecasts, not only backward industries, but also technically advanced enterprises found themselves

in a difficult situation. Investments had practically ceased. The situation in agriculture deteriorated without state financial support. A heavy blow was dealt to the intellectual potential of society: the reduction of funding for science, higher education provoked a mass exodus from research institutions to commerce; the "brain drain" abroad began; the inflow of young people in science was sharply reduced. Other state employees were put on "starvation ration": secondary school, health care, social security, and cultural institutions. For the state, all these spheres fell out of priority for a long time.

The "reformers" did not manage to solve the main problem they had set for themselves - to achieve a deficit-free budget and bring down inflation. After a surplus in April 1992, the budget deficit grew to 5.2% of GDP in May, 17% in June, and 19.6% in August. In the fall, this again led to a surge in inflation. In September it was 11.5%; in October - 22.9%; in November - 26.1%; in December - 25.4%, that is, by October 1992 the country was again on the verge of hyperinflation. In December of 1991, the ruble-dollar exchange rate was 1:20, and in the middle of 1992 it was supposed to keep it at 1:60, but in December the dollar was bought for 308 rubles (in summer of 1993 - over 1,000 rubles).

In assessing the economic transformations of 1992, society was split in two. The beneficiaries of the changes were following the reformers in giving purely positive assessments. The government was credited with the fact that, in contrast to its predecessors, it had moved from talk to action and finally "moved" the economy toward the market: the reforms, although painful, followed the only possible path in those circumstances. The

beginning of mass privatization, which was supposed to create a competitive market environment, was considered an achievement. One of the most important achievements from the point of view of perspective was the change in people's consciousness: deprived of the traditional state support, people had to rely more and more on their own strength. This would liberate the creative, entrepreneurial potential of those more willing to establish new forms of social organization.

Those who lost out from the changes had a very different view of what had happened. They pointed to the exorbitant social price paid by the population for the transition to the market (a huge rise in prices and a sharp fall in living standards, "robbing" citizens through the depreciation of many years of savings, and the growth of social contrasts due to sharp property differentiation). The professionalism of the team of "reformers" was questioned: they made significant miscalculations when forecasting price growth and inflation dynamics, disregarded the real economy, "tough" (if not cruel) attitude towards budgetary sectors and the social sphere. The criminalization of the social sphere also aroused dissatisfaction. The government also engaged in criminalization of social and economic life, including corrupt practices by public officials and an increase in violent property crimes.

The mentioned groups used different criteria in evaluating the changes that took place in 1992. The supporters of the first group thought that everything was done in those specific historical conditions. Economic collapse, fundamental incompetence of the former management system, lack of market behavior skills led,

according to this position, to great "costs" in the exit from socialism. Resistance of "conservative" forces, "birthmarks of socialism" predetermined a painful perception of necessary measures, which were not fully implemented, which delayed the process as a whole.

The main mass of the Russian population proceeded from a comparison of what had been promised earlier and what had actually been received as a result of the beginning of the reforms. Against the background of the gloomy reality of late 1992, the populist promises of 1990-1991 to switch to a market economy quickly and with minimal losses were particularly annoying. On the eve of 1993 it became clear that the approval of the market had not happened, the country was at the beginning of a new "transitional period", the end of which was still not in sight, and it would take more than 6-8 months to "suffer". Both politicians and economists increasingly used the term "deception" when comparing what the population was initially focused on with what the government later took credit for. Distrust of the "reformers" and a feeling of conscious deception were fueled by their lack of self-criticism, and the accelerated redistribution of accumulated wealth reinforced the impression that the essence of the "reforms" taking place in the country was a vulgar robbery of the majority of the population.

Autonomous Regions

An attempt to stop the disintegration processes. In the sphere of the federal structure in 1992, the new Russian state inherited the problems that had arisen during the

confrontation between it and the union authorities in 1990-1991. At that time, Union leaders invited the autonomous republics to participate in the drafting and direct signing of a new Union Treaty. In legal terms, this actually meant raising the status of the autonomous republics to that of union republics. In practice, it weakened those union republics - primarily Russia and Georgia, where autonomies had an important place. The RSFSR believed that this could lead to Russia's breakup. Therefore, "to spite the union republics," the Russian leaders offered their autonomies any degree of freedom ("sovereignty") acceptable to them without stipulating any preconditions.

The leaders of the Russian autonomies, maneuvering between the Union and Russian centers of power, sought to gain maximum benefit for themselves. On the one hand, the leaders of the large autonomies took part in Gorbachev's "New Year process" on an equal footing with the unionist. On the other hand, they adopted declarations of sovereignty in which they proclaimed the creation of their own statehood with all its attributes, the supremacy of their own laws; there were claims to republican property and subsoil. All this created an extremely confusing political and legal situation.

The defeat of the supporters of preserving the USSR in August 1991 and the victory of the Russian leaders over their political opponents marked the beginning of a new stage in Russia's "federative" policy. It was necessary to rebuild the becoming independent Russian state, renouncing many political, economic and ideological attributes of the past. Relations between the Center and the subjects of the Federation had to be put in order, and

a system that would take into account both national interests and national-regional specifics had to be created. The unproductiveness of the approaches used in 1990 - mid-1991 became evident.

Meanwhile, the processes launched in 1990 had a powerful inertia. In the second half of 1991, presidents were elected in a number of former autonomies, which was supposed to emphasize their status as state entities. In September, the Chechen Republic proclaimed independence. In October, the Supreme Soviet of Tatarstan adopted a resolution "On the Act of State Independence of the Republic of Tatarstan," and in December its leaders declared the republic's readiness to act as a co-founder of the CIS. In September-October 1991, the "sovereign republics" within Russia "cleaned up" the property previously held by the Soviet agencies. Representatives of most of the former autonomies insisted that a federative treaty be signed to confirm their unilaterally proclaimed privileges. In effect, this led to the confederalization of Russia, and put the country's territorial integrity at risk.

In an effort to prevent centrifugal processes, the Russian authorities in the fall of 1991. In contrast to the previous idea of a federative treaty, they proposed creating a document on the division of powers between the federal government and the governments of the subjects of the Federation. This position was actively supported by the Russian territories and regions, which since spring had expressed dissatisfaction with their lowered status in comparison with the republics. The difficulties of the first stage of economic reforms, the beginning of confrontation between Russia's executive and legislative

structures, contributed to the revival of ethno-separatist movements in early 1992. Its result was the Federative Treaty, signed on March 31, 1992. In fact, this term combined three documents, the initial part of the titles of which had the same form: The Federal Treaty: "Treaty on the Delimitation of Subjects of Jurisdiction and Powers Between the Federation".- "The differences concerned the endings": and "The authorities of the sovereign republics within the Russian Federation", 2) "... the "authorities of the krajs, oblasts, cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg of the Russian Federation", 3) "authorities of the autonomous okrugs within the Russian Federation". It followed from the texts that republics had a higher status than krajs, oblasts and autonomies. The republics were called "sovereign", the integrity of their territories was assigned to them; the land and subsoil were declared the property of the peoples living in them; the full plenitude of the state power was provided for them; they were independent participants of the international and foreign economic relations.

The contradictory legal status of territories and regions did not provide for all this

- The documents had a contradictory impact on the political life of the country. On the one hand, they fixed the federal nature of the state structure and thus weakened the centrifugal processes. On the other hand, it preserved the unequal statuses of the republics and provinces (regions) of Russia and created a situation of rivalry and estrangement of some subjects of the Federation from other subjects. Soon after the Treaty was signed, the Council of the Heads of the Republics

was established to emphasize once again their difference from other subjects of the Federation. The heads of the republics did not consider it possible to use the very notion of a "subject of the federation" in relation to the krais and oblasts. Of the constitutions adopted in 21 republics, 19 contradicted the Russian one. The "sovereign entities" sought greater privileges in budgetary relations with the Center and in the formation of their law enforcement system.

Already in the autumn of 1992, an active struggle of territories and regions for equal rights with the republics began. In November, representatives of 53 regions created the Union of Governors, the head of which became a member of the Council of the Heads of the Republics. The territories and regions sought the elimination of injustice in raising their status to the level of the republics. The process of sovereignty, in which the main role now belonged to the regional entities, intensified again. Soon Vyatka and Tula adopted their own constitutions, state sovereignty was proclaimed in Vologda, and other regions and provinces announced an increase in their status. The struggle culminated in the proclamation of the Urals Republic in November 1993.

The construction of the new Federation was also complicated by the situation in some regions of the country. The Republic of Tatarstan did not sign the federative treaty. Moreover, despite protests by the federal powers, in November 1992, following the referendum, its Supreme Soviet would not sign the federation treaty. In November 1992, following a referendum, its Supreme Soviet approved a new Constitution presenting Tatarstan as "a sovereign state

subject to international law, associated with Russia on the basis of a treaty". This unilaterally established a confederal nature of relations between Russia and one of its subjects. The leaders of Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and Yakutia, followed the path of "budgetary separatism," a unilateral redistribution of resources, property, and power in favor of their republic.

In 1992, the Chechen Republic moved further and further away from the legal framework of the Federation, becoming a special zone of Russia. It saw duty-free exports and imports of goods, illegal arms trade, and financial speculation. The region became a major producer and transit point for drug trafficking and entered a phase of acute socio-economic crisis. Chechen society was rapidly criminalized. Since late 1991, military units and arms depots were seized. By May 1992 the Dudayevs controlled 80% of military equipment (108 tanks, 51 planes, 153 pieces of artillery and mortars, 600 anti-tank guided missiles and anti-aircraft missile systems) and 75% of small arms, formerly belonging to the Soviet Army. By June, the number of regular troops in the republic had reached 15,000. The stumbling block in negotiations between Moscow and Grozny was the issue of Chechnya's status: the Chechen side insisted on recognition of its independence.

A belt of instability formed along the perimeter of Russia's borders. The dissolution of the USSR at the end of 1991 created a situation of political and legal uncertainty in relations between the former Soviet republics. On the one hand, they proclaimed themselves sovereign states and achieved independence from the "imperial center" in Moscow. On the other hand,

unification within the CIS allowed them to determine the possible forms and directions of new interaction. This, however, was not done in 1992. The attention of local elites was concentrated on the construction of independent statehood and the desire to control the initiated economic reforms. Relations between Russia and its closest neighbors were complicated by a number of other factors.

Russia's economic policy differed significantly from the methods of transformation in other republics. However, all of them continued to be in a single ruble zone, which gave rise to acute interstate contradictions. The new states began an intensive search for new political and economic allies in Europe and Asia.

Internal Military Affairs

Politicians understood the difficulties of the possible division of arms of the former Union, and initially there was some hope for the preservation of a unified army within the CIS. At the end of 1991, the Common Command of the Common Armed Forces (CAF) of the CIS was established, headed by Air Marshal Ye.I. Shaposhnikov. The sentiments against its division were strong in the army itself. In February 1992, participants of the All-Army Officers' Meeting issued an appeal calling on "the leaders of the Commonwealth of Independent States to preserve the integrity of the state border, the unified security system and the unified military-industrial complex for the transitional period.

A single military-strategic space, a single system of

management of the Armed Forces. The president of Russia was ready to "fight to the death" for a unified Armed Forces. At that time, in February, the troops in the Baltic States, Transcaucasia, Moldova, as well as in Central and Eastern Europe, were placed under Russian jurisdiction. However, the tendency to create their own armies prevailed.

In the "vanguard" was Ukraine. Its position was openly expressed by President L. M. Kravchuk: "We do not have a single state and cannot have a single Armed Forces. The process of forming new armies took place unilaterally, without prior agreements. It often took the form of "nationalization" of entire military districts and armies, and "privatization" of military property and weapons. The position of the army in the "legal vacuum" became critical. It was not uncommon for soldiers to cross over to the territories of "their" republics. Aggressive nationalist forces, particularly in the Transcaucasus, also laid claim to Soviet military property. Arms seizures began spontaneously, with the result that large quantities of weapons fell into the hands of uncontrolled formations. All this prompted Russia to create its own army, and a decree to this effect was signed by B. N. Yeltsin on May 7, 1992. In May, the single commandment of the CIS Armed Forces also ceased to exist.

The beginning of the practical partition of the "Soviet military legacy" led to an acute crisis in Russian-Ukrainian relations in summer 1992. The issues of the status of Sevastopol and the fate of the Black Sea Fleet (BSF) were at the center of attention. As early as January of the same year, Ukraine, ignoring the status of

the Black Sea Fleet as part of the CIS Armed Forces, began demanding from the personnel to take an oath of allegiance to this republic. This was followed by Yeltsin's visit to Sevastopol and his statement about the unlawfulness of Ukraine's claims. At the end of March Kravchuk issued a decree transferring all the formations stationed in Ukraine under its jurisdiction, to which the Russian President responded on April 7 with a decree transferring the Black Sea Fleet under Russian jurisdiction. On April 9, both decrees were suspended, but the decision to raise the Russian Andreev flag on the Black Sea Fleet ships almost led to an armed clash in Crimea. The conflict prompted the two presidents to meet in person in Yalta on August 3, 1992. The solution of the Sevastopol problem and the fleet was postponed until 1995, and the Black Sea Fleet was jointly subordinated to the presidents of Russia and Ukraine for the "transitional period".

In 1992, problems also arose with the nuclear weapons of the former Soviet Union. The original plan was to retain the joint strategic deterrence forces and not to dismantle nuclear weapons. Their management was in the hands of the President of Russia and the Commander-in-Chief of the CIS Armed Forces. Further, however, unlike Belarus and Kazakhstan, Ukraine did not renounce its status as a nuclear power. Moreover, on July 2, 1992 it declared that it owned 691 nuclear warheads located on its territory (one fifth of the strategic potential of the former Soviet Union), which caused additional concern, and not only for Russia. A "bargaining" began: Ukraine conditioned its renunciation of its nuclear power status on material and political demands, which were addressed both to Russia and to

the world community as a whole.

The achievement of independence was almost universally accompanied by an increase in the nationalism of the titular nations, which affected the "non-indigenous" population. There were 25 million Russians in the new states. Difficulties in obtaining citizenship, the reduced use of the Russian language and opportunities for education in it, formal and informal barriers to engage in certain activities - all these problems posed a new challenge for the Russian government - protecting the rights of ethnic Russians in the new abroad.

The collapse of the USSR and the division of its arms led to new outbreaks of interethnic conflicts in the young states. Moldova increased political and military pressure on Transnistria, culminating in an armed assault on Bender in June 1992. Almost simultaneously, Georgia tried to use arms to "pacify" South Ossetia. Georgian military operations against the "Abkhaz separatists" began in August. The war in Abkhazia was marked by the Confederation of Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus (CGNC), *an organization of solidarity created by the fourteen peoples of the North Caucasus*. CGNC declared a total guerrilla war on Georgia and sent up to 5,000 volunteers to the conflict zone. Among them was a Chechen battalion led by Sh. In October 1992, clashes between Ingush and Ossetians broke out, the first armed confrontation in the Russian Federation proper. The situation in other regions of the former Soviet Union was unfavorable for the Russian Federation as well. By the time the Najibullah regime in Afghanistan was overthrown and the Mujahideen troops occupied Kabul,

the civil war had already started in Tajikistan.

Russia, interested in preserving order on the border with Afghanistan, was also forced to intervene in the inter-Tajik clashes. All conflicts in the post-Soviet space have been accompanied by numerous human casualties, including civilians. For historical and political reasons, Russia could not remain aloof from the conflicts. It destabilized the situation inside the country, complicating its relations with both "near" and "far" abroad. Political confrontation was escalating. The desire to ensure Russia's rightful place in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and to start effective reforms in the 1990s-mid 1991, rallied Russians. At the political level, it was reflected in the support for the actions of the president and the government by the Congress and the RSFSR Supreme Soviet.

With the beginning of discussions on specific transformations in the second half of 1991, the situation changed rapidly, and from 1992 the political climate in society was determined primarily by the state of the economy, which had a decisive influence on the disposition and positions of the main political forces. Significant social groups and a variety of socio-political organizations began to move in opposition to the government. It is conditionally possible to distinguish "irreconcilable", or "constructive" and parliamentary opposition.

In winter and spring of 1992, a resurgent communist movement made its presence felt. The leaders of the Russian Communist Workers' Party chose demonstrations and rallies as the main form of protest

against the government policies. Together with "Trudovaya Rossiya" they conducted a demonstration in Moscow on February 9, 1992, called "march on the White House", which was attended by up to 100 thousand people. Various currents of national-patriotic orientation were also activated. On February 8, the Congress of Civil and Patriotic Forces of Russia took place in Moscow; and on February 15 the Russian National Council was formed.

On February 23, 1992 "communists" and "patriots" took an active part in the demonstration that took place in Moscow. The first open clash between the authorities and the "irreconcilable" opposition occurred that day. OMON riot squads stood in the way of the demonstrators, who had gathered in the center of the capital to march to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and lay flowers. Many participants had the feeling that the authorities had deliberately escalated the situation, wishing to "teach a lesson" to the "leftist" forces. The events of February 23rd were dubbed "Bloody Sunday" and served as a catalyst for the opposition to unite into a bloc of communist and state-patriotic forces. This decision was adopted on March 1 at a meeting of leaders of parties, movements, deputies of Soviets of various levels, and editors of "patriotic" publications. The participants of the meeting adopted a declaration on the creation of a united opposition under the slogan "Justice. Popularity. Statehood. Patriotism". This idea was formalized organizationally on October 24, 1992, when the National Salvation Front was created.

The "constructive" opposition included a variety of organizations. Among them was the block "People's

Consent" (members: the Democratic Party - DPR; the Russian Christian Democratic Movement; the Constitutional Democratic Party), which in November 1991 emerged from the movement "Democratic Russia". The "New Russia" bloc, formed in January 1992, also demanded adjustments to the reforms, uniting the parties of the center-left (the Social-Democratic Party of Russia, the Social Democratic Party of Russia, the Socialist Party of the USSR, and the Socialist Party of the USSR). The Social Democratic Party, the People's Party of Russia, the Peasant Party of Russia, and the Social Liberal Union of the Russian Federation). The Civic Union (CU), which emerged in June 1992, was considered the most influential centrist organization. It included the DPR led by N. I. Travkin, the People's Party "Free Russia", headed by Vice President Alexander V. Rutskoi, and the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (later - the Russian Union "Renewal"), whose leader was Alexander I. Volsky.

Throughout 1992, the antagonism between the legislative and executive branches of power was escalating: it is often called the "crisis of dual power". Formally, it was based on the contradictions in Russia's constitutional order, but in fact it was based on the dissatisfaction of the parliamentarians with the reforms performed. All this led to a situation when the conflicting sides disputed the right to determine their policies and influence the formation of the government. By the spring of 1992, three main blocs had formed in the parliament: the pro-government bloc of about 250 MPs, the centrist bloc of over 300, and the bloc "Russian Unity", which was openly opposing, with up to 350 MPs. The two latter often took similar positions with respect to the

presidential course during the voting.

The first crisis in the relationship between the legislative and executive powers became apparent in March 1992, at the VI Congress of People's Deputies. It was then resolved by the president, who with his authority "covered" the government and promised to make some concessions in exchange for giving the "young reformers" an opportunity to work until the end of the year in order "to straighten out" the situation.

However, the main battles between the conflicting branches of power unfolded at the VII Congress of People's Deputies on December 4, 1992. On the very first day of its work, Boris Yeltsin proposed to introduce a "stabilization period", under which both sides would follow the previously agreed "rules of the game". It was suggested to expand the powers of the government, which would be accountable both to the RF President and the Congress of People's Deputies. The Supreme Soviet would lose the right to interfere in its activities, but would be able to "challenge the decisions of the government in the Constitutional Court and with the President". The latter retained the right to choose a prime minister and appoint ministers. Yeltsin suggested that the Congress temporarily give up its attempts to strengthen its influence on the executive branch by exercising its right to introduce amendments to the Constitution. In essence, it meant preserving the balance of power that had been approved by the Fifth Congress in October 1991.

The Congress rejected the proposals and then, by the majority of votes, rejected the candidacy of E. T. Gaidar

proposed by the president for the position of the prime minister. In response, on December 10, Yeltsin made a televised address to the nation at the Congress session "over the deputies' heads". He called the Congress and Khasbulatov personally the main strongholds of conservatism, laying the main responsibility for the difficult situation in the country on them and accusing them of preparing a "creeping coup". And he proposed to hold a referendum on the question: "Whom do you entrust with leading the country out of economic and political crisis and reviving the Russian Federation: the current Congress and the Supreme Soviet or the president of Russia?"

Following this, Yeltsin urged his supporters to leave the congress hall. However, the attempt to disrupt the Congress failed. Only about 150 parliamentarians left with the president: there was a quorum in the hall. In a heated atmosphere, the congress adopted a number of amendments to the constitution, restricting the president's powers. An acute political crisis arose, which had the potential to destabilize the country and split the state apparatus. The compromise was reached on December 12, with the active mediation of the president of the Constitutional Court V. V. Lukashenko and D. Zorkin. As a result, the Presidential Address and amendments to the Constitution were cancelled, a referendum on the draft of the new Basic Law was scheduled for April 1993, and the President pledged to appoint a prime minister, taking into account the opinion of the congress.

§ 2. Economic Transformations and Their Social Consequences. 1992-1998

Inflation control.

The term "shock therapy" is often used to refer to the post-communist transformation of Russia's economy, although its temporal boundaries are understood differently. Some people associate "shock therapy" only with the measures taken by the government in the winter and spring of 1992. When the liberal course was pursued in its purest form. Others have in mind the whole year of 1992. When the team led by Gaidar was in charge of the reforms. Some others consider this course within the framework of the years 1992-1998, when the government was headed by Yelena T. Gaidar, Viktor S. Chernomyrdin, and Sergei V. Kiriyenko, respectively. Fourthly, some think that the basic ideas of shock therapy have not disappeared from today's economic policy. There is also an opinion that "shock therapy" as a holistic system of measures has not been used in our country at all. However, in all cases the ending year of 1998 is singled out as a frontier. When, according to the famous economist A. V. Ulyukaev, "the most important cycle of market reforms in Russia ended". A new and very difficult stage of the country's development began. It is indisputable that in 1992-1998 the Russian leadership was focused on the problem of financial stabilization, which was to be achieved by means of the monetary policy.

The situation in Russia has not always been consistent.

It was greatly influenced by the internal political situation (confrontation between the executive and legislative branches of power, pre-election parliamentary and presidential campaigns), the socio-economic situation in the country (the condition of certain branches and regions and the level of social tension) and external factors (relations with international financial institutions and the world economic situation).

The way to financial stabilization was through the fight against inflation and the reduction of the budget deficit. It is known from the world practice that economic growth is observed when the annual rate of inflation does not exceed 40%, while in Russia in 1992 it was 2509%. In 1993-1998, inflation was suppressed at high rates; in 1993 it was equal to 840%, in 1994 - 215%, in 1995 - 131%, and in 1996 - already 21%. However, despite such a notable result, it was perceived by few in society as an achievement. This was due to the deterioration of major macroeconomic indicators, which is much more obvious. Between 1992 and 1998, Russia's GDP fell by almost 44 percent (by comparison, during the Great Patriotic War it fell by 24 percent), industrial output by 56 percent, and investment declined sharply. The budget deficit decreased from 30% to 4.8%, which was achieved by the state abandoning important traditional obligations and functions (in medicine, education, science, and the social sphere).

The consumer market was filled with a variety of goods, but this problem was solved not by developing our own production, but by increasing imports in exchange for fuel and energy resources, metals and other raw materials. If we follow this trend, then only to buy bread

at the expense of oil exports oil production should be increased 6-8 times. With an open economy in purely market conditions, to develop domestic production was simply unprofitable, because Russia - the coldest country in the world, there is a higher level of specific energy consumption and, consequently - costs. At the same time extraction of fuel and energy resources in the Far North and beyond the Urals makes them 1.5-2 times more expensive.

In addition, the Russian market was filled with goods not due to the intensification and expansion of their production, but through the elementary increase in prices, many couldn't buy them. This led to a huge gap between the solvent demand of the majority of Russian citizens and the mass of goods offered for consumption. In 1995. 40% of the population, classified as poor, had a per capita income 2.5 times lower than the average level, and 20% of its wealthy part had a per capita income 2.3 times higher than the average level. Twenty-two percent, 22% of the population had incomes below the subsistence level. This indicated that the "deficit economy" had not been eliminated, but had shifted from one form (commodity) to another (money).

The result of the "shock" nature of the changes in 1992-1998 was the separation of economic life at the monetary level from processes in the real economy; the "departure" or even "flight" of money from the sphere of production. This led to the fact that in the 90's the domestic economy was covered by the deepest investment crisis. The absolute level of investment had fallen since 1990 by three quarters, and the volume of industrial investment - four-fifths. Many enterprises were

deprived of the opportunity to renew their technical base. With the general reduction of the investments in the production sector the specific weight of the investments in the fuel and energy complex, metallurgy, transport and communication increased. The share of investments in the processing industries decreased. There was a tendency of outstripping development of the energy and raw materials, oil and gas, ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, and export-oriented timber production sectors. All this had grave consequences for the Russian economy. The competitiveness of domestic goods not only in the world but also in the domestic market was reduced; the number of accidents and the cost of repair of worn-out equipment were growing; opportunities for economic growth, especially in science-intensive industries, were narrowing; the demand for construction and installation work and scientific and technical products decreased. There was a threatening situation when the inevitably large-scale and rapid reduction of obsolete production equipment was not accompanied by its replacement with new equipment.

Speculative Economy

The causes of the investment crisis were complex. The main one was connected with the fact that the state actually left this sphere, and the new subjects of investment were either economically weak, or were not fully formed, or did not have sufficient incentives to invest in the real sector. Privatized enterprises did not always have enough funds even to service current production needs, many remained unprofitable (40% of enterprises in 1996 were still unprofitable). The lack of

monetary resources led even to the reproduction of barter relations, the introduction of substitutes, surrogates of money. Investment funds, insurance companies and other institutions, usually accumulating the financial resources of the population in market conditions and focused on their multiplication, experienced difficult processes of formation.

Nor were commercial banks directly interested in funding industry, which behaved quite "market-like" in 1992-1998. At that time, the state used to borrow money from them at very high interest rates. On the level of profitability and the degree of risk, financial markets looked much preferable to the real sector. At certain periods the government's investments in securities provided investors with a stable annual rate of return of 80 to 100 percent or more. This created unfavorable conditions for capital investments, which set extremely high requirements to efficiency of entrepreneurial projects. To be comparable to the financial sector, the rate of return on invested capital should have been at least 50-80% per annum, which domestic enterprises were practically unable to achieve. Thus, the economic model, which is called a speculative economy, was formed. Taken together, all these factors contributed to the depressed state of the real sector of the Russian economy in 1992-1998.

Russian Budget

The main factor deepening the crisis was the state of the Russian budget. The government strictly adhered to the

policy of reducing public spending, which, nevertheless, amounted to about 45% of GDP. At the same time, through the whole financial system it was possible to mobilize much less funds, on average 32-33% of GDP. The budget deficit was reproduced from year to year, amounting to about 7%. It was connected with the reduction of the financial base as a result of the fall of the GDP volume, the widespread practice of non-payment to the budget, poor tax collection, and the concealment of a significant part of the income from taxation.

The state was forced to constantly borrow to cover the deficit in the budget. It was covered by 25-40% by federal loan bonds (OFZ); up to 25% by loans from international financial organizations; 10% by loans from foreign commercial banks and firms; more than 5% by loans from foreign governments; and 25% by government short-term obligations (GKO).

In the 1990s, national debt became one of Russia's main economic problems. Domestic government debt was growing rapidly: it exceeded 25% of GDP by mid-1998. Correspondingly, budgetary expenditures to service it were growing, reaching almost 4% of GDP. No less dangerous was the growth of the external public debt, which by the beginning of 1998 exceeded 20% of GDP. To the \$105 billion in debt that Russia inherited from the USSR, more than \$50 billion of new debts were added, surpassing \$156 billion in 1998 (the amount of foreign debt). On this indicator, Russia has moved from 12th to first place in the world. For several years, it had been negotiating debt restructuring. As a result, it did not get a write-off, but only a deferral of repayment of the principal

amount with interest. Since 2000 our country had to pay back over \$10 billion annually on foreign debts. States which reform their economies often use technical loans, which are taken out over long periods of time for specific industrial and other projects. The Russian Federation has resorted to consumer loans which are mostly used to meet current needs in the economy and social sphere. At the same time, the materialization of credits was carried out at the expense of consumer goods purchased abroad. In this case, there was actually a crediting of production of the creditor-country.

However, the main problem of Russia's public debt was not its size, although huge, but its maturity (a large proportion of "short", up to one year, debts) and the high cost of servicing it. As a result, a growing share of new borrowings was spent on interest payments on old debts, while the share of funds used to finance the budget deficit (i.e. internal needs) was decreasing. In 1996 public debt service amounted to 12.8% of total federal budget expenditures, while in 1998 similar payments were to amount to almost 33%! This was the tipping point, after which the chronic crisis of the Russian financial system became acute. On August 17, the government undertook a series of extraordinary measures, including a devaluation of the ruble: its value against the dollar was tripled; the inflation rate "jumped" from 11% in 1997 to 84.4% by the end of 1998. There was a default: the state abandoned its domestic and foreign debt obligations in the form in which it had taken them earlier.

The most important socio-economic consequences of the August 17 crisis were: a large-scale shutdown in the

most advanced market sectors of the economy, a noticeable increase in unemployment, the undermining of the middle class, a rapid increase in consumer prices, a significant reduction in real incomes, a decline in living standards and confidence in banks and the Russian national currency. The crisis has not only demonstrated the ineffectiveness of the reforms introduced since 1992, but also dealt a serious blow to the professional and political credibility of those who stood behind them.

Privatization in Russia

Privatization of the state property in Russia is one of the most complex and debatable directions of the economic policy of 1992-1998. The logic of the initiators of the chosen course in this area is set forth in the book *Privatization the Russian Way*, published in 1999 under the editorship of A.B. Chubais. The work should be treated as a document outlining the main problems and the most controversial points. As a result of the complex political, economic and ideological processes of perestroika time in 1990, private property was legalized in the USSR. The awareness of the need to de-monopolize and create a competitive environment as a prerequisite for the country's exit from crisis and economic growth led to the fact that in the most famous programs of transition to market (Plan II, И. Abalkin, G. A. Yavlinsky's "500 days" program) privatization was mentioned as one of the main elements of the structural reform of the economy. Since the end of that year, the Committee for Economic Reform of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR started working on the possible options of privatization. In the spring of 1991, Russia created the

State Committee for Property Management (GKI), which until November was headed by M. D. Maley, who was also engaged in these problems. On July 3, 1991 the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR passed a law on privatization. However, political twists and turns in the Soviet Union in July and October blocked the possibility of any targeted economic policy, including privatization. The proclamation of the course on the independent implementation of market reforms by the V Congress of People's Deputies of Russia (October 1991) in a qualitatively new political and economic situation, the creation of the "government of reforms" under the actual premiership of Ye. T. Gaidar was accompanied by a significant adjustment of ideas about the priorities and the form of implementation of the necessary measures. In the Government, A.B. Chubais was put in charge of the privatization process, who in November had become the Chairman of the State Property Committee (GKI). Along with him came M. Boiko, D. Vasilyev, A. Evstafyev, A. Kazakov, A. Kokh, P. Mostovoy and some others, whose names also became famous in the 1990s.

The new "team" was actively engaged in preparation of changes in property relations in the context of the radical economic changes planned for 1992. And the reformers proceeded from their vision of the prevailing situation by the end of 1991. Firstly, in their opinion, the process of "spontaneous privatization" was already in full swing, there was uncontrolled plundering of the state property. Secondly, the state was ruined and unable to influence what was happening in this sphere. Third, the dire state of Russia's economy required the urgent adoption of non-standard measures, which would not meet with broad social and political support. All this was

aggravated by the lack of a well-developed legal and regulatory framework for privatization, the necessary organizational structures and trained personnel.

Under these conditions, it seemed difficult to predict the economic efficiency of privatization, the main task was considered to be "launching the process". Therefore, the transfer of state property into private hands should be done not in a piecemeal fashion, but on a mass scale: it was necessary to "denationalize" over 240 thousand economic entities. The lack of funds and the inflationary erosion of savings made it impossible to buy out public property in full force, which conditioned its sale at symbolic, clearly understated prices. There was an urgent need for developing a legal basis for privatization, which the "government of reformers" had to carry out in coordination with the Supreme Soviet, and most importantly, make active use of the enormous legal powers of the president. The withdrawal of the state from the sphere of economic management was axiomatically considered a condition for the future rise of the economy. However, the emergence of an "efficient owner" and a "strategic investor" was conceived as a result first of denationalization, and then of a market redistribution of the former "nationwide" property. On the speed and intensity of this process depended approaching the time of economic growth. Therefore, according to some researchers, the course towards "permanent privatization" was seen both as part of the market redistribution of the country's economy and as a way of changing the mentality of its population.

The new ideology of privatization was reflected in two documents of late December 1991. These were the

Presidential Decree "On Acceleration of Privatization of State and Municipal Enterprises" and the "Main Provisions of the Program of Privatization of State and Municipal Enterprises for 1992", approved by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. The GKI was to be responsible for implementation of the program. It issued its own orders and prepared the government resolutions related to privatization. To minimize possible abuses, it was decided to separate the functions of preparing the objects for privatization and their sale. The SPC itself was to be in charge of setting the former, while the Russian Federal Property Fund was to be created for selling them. Similar structures were created in all regions in the first half of 1992, "Small privatization" was gaining momentum, but politicians were focused on discussing amendments to the previously adopted law on privatization. They were to define the framework conditions of the "big privatization" - the mass sale of medium and large enterprises in various industries. On June 11, 1992 the Supreme Soviet adopted such a law.

On August 14, 1992 the President issued a decree predetermining the beginning and the content of the first, "voucher" stage of privatization, which lasted 22 months, until July 1, 1994. The voucher privatization model stipulated the transformation of large and medium state enterprises into joint-stock companies with their subsequent transfer directly to the citizens, among whom the workers of the privatized enterprises received benefits. Privatization checks - vouchers - were introduced for the participation of the population in acquiring shares, which symbolized the equality of starting conditions for all participants of privatization. The book value of production assets in Russia by the

end of 1991 was estimated at 1260.5 billion rubles. It was divided by the number of the country's population - 148.7 million people, which gave the sum of 8476 rubles, which for convenience was rounded to 10 thousand and was defined as the share of each Russian citizen's property in the "all-people's" property. In September 1992, Sberbank branches began issuing vouchers to the population, mostly completed by the spring of 1993. In total, Russian citizens received 146,064 million vouchers. Due to increasing inflation, their value was falling catastrophically: if in late 1991 10,000 rubles was approximately half the price of a car (such as a Zhiguli), then in late 1993 it was the price of 3-4 bottles of vodka. The population was to exchange the vouchers they received for company shares, which would mean legally joining the rights of the owner. However, since not everyone was prepared to go into the subtleties of the privatization process, the country began to create check investment funds (CIFs). By the spring of 1994, there were already about 650 of them, many of them were widely advertised. The funds' objective was to accumulate large blocks of the population's vouchers in order to invest them further in the shares of the most profitable enterprises, and, consequently, to receive the maximum income. However, the lack of control on the part of the state, the unqualified, or even simply semi-criminal management of the funds resulted in the fact that most of them "died," devaluing tens of millions of vouchers and forming a negative perception of privatization among ordinary citizens.

On the whole, the fate of the vouchers was as follows. 25% of the checks went to the Private Equity Funds, 25 were sold: they were mostly parted with by the people

who were skeptical about privatization. These cheques passed into the hands of physical persons as well as legal entities that actually participated in the cheque auctions and invested their vouchers more or less effectively. Approximately 50% of the remaining vouchers were invested by labor members and their relatives in shares of their own companies (either by private subscription or at check auctions).

Decisions to secure the shares in federal ownership or sell them (in full or in part) were made by the government and the SPC, and they also determined the timing of transactions. All Russian citizens participated in privatization, but the employees of privatized enterprises received benefits. There were three groups of benefits in total.

✓ In the first version, registered preferred "non-voting shares" (25% of the company's authorized capital) were transferred to members of the labor collective.

Employees could buy another 10% of common shares on preferential terms. The administration of the enterprise had the right to buy 5% of shares.

✓ In the second, all members of the labor collective could buy common, voting shares, making up to 51% of the capital. In this case there was no free transfer and preferential sale of shares. However, employees of the enterprise had the right to participate in a closed subscription to its shares.

✓ Under the third version, a group of employees (often including top managers) of an enterprise subject to certain obligations. In addition, all those who worked at the company (both the administration and other employees) could purchase another 20% of ordinary shares on preferential terms.

The choice of privatization benefits under the second and third options was based on the decision of the labor collective, if not less than 2% the total number of employees voted for it. In the absence of an agreed decision the benefits were provided by the first option. In addition to those listed above, one of the methods of ✓ Russian privatization was rent with the right to buy. According to GKI estimates, by the spring of 1994 the share of internal shareholders in the capital was 60-65%, external shareholders - 18-22%, and the state - up to 17%. This indicated that a rather blurred ownership structure had been formed, which did not provide clear advantages of control to any group of shareholders. By July 1, 1994 70% of industrial enterprises had been denationalized, and the share of state ownership in the total value of property had fallen to 35%.

In the generalizing work "Economics of the transition period", published in 1998 under the editorship of E.T. Gaidar, the cheque privatization model is assessed as follows: "It is naive enough to assess the results of implementation of this model by those formal goals, which were written down in the programs of privatization ✓ The real goal was only one: temporary mass distribution and consolidation of formal rights of private property with a minimum of social conflicts in anticipation of the next transactions in favor of effective owners.

On December 9, 1994 the State Duma adopted a resolution in which it recognized the results of the first phase of privatization as unsatisfactory. Its negative perception was due to the discrepancy between the publicly declared principles, goals, objectives and those

immediate results of privatization, which most citizens encountered. Later on the "privatizers" themselves connected the differences from the "etalon" model with the resistance to the conducted course in the implementation of which numerous violations of the law became an inevitable payment for the radical redistribution of property to take place in principle. The contradictions of the first stage are described in the document prepared for the head of the government V.P. Polevanovsh, who, after A. Chubais for a short time (late 1994 - early 1995) in the rank of Deputy Prime Minister tried to analyze the inherited property.

In the document it was noted that the privatization program outlined seven main objectives. ✓ The first was the formation of a layer of private owners, contributing to the creation of a socially-oriented market economy. The author noted that formally 40 million people became shareholders, while in reality the property is owned by a small part of the population.

✓ The second objective of the program - to increase efficiency of enterprises through their privatization - was also not achieved.

✓ The third objective - social protection of the population and development of social infrastructure at the expense of privatization funds - was not realized.

✓ The fourth objective - contributing to the stabilization of the country's financial situation - also turned out to be merely proclaimed.

✓ Movement towards the fifth objective - creation of competitive environment and promotion of demonopolization caused lots of criticism, as striving to demonopolize at any price caused break up of technological chains and industrial production failure.

- ✓ The hope for realization of the sixth objective - to attract foreign investments turned out to be illusory as well: firstly, they even reduced and, secondly, were directed mostly to the extractive industries.
- ✓ The seventh objective foresaw the creation of conditions and organizational structures in order to expand the scope of privatization. For its implementation across the country there was created a system of bodies of the State Property Committee, the Russian Fund of Federal Property, the Federal Agency on Bankruptcy, a network of private pension funds.

Thus, only the seventh and formally the first of the seven privatization objectives have been fully implemented, while in practice five of them have been failed. The negative consequence of the chosen model of denationalization was a *huge increase in crime associated with privatization*. Deputy Prime Minister also believed that the reforms contributed to the undermining of national security, which manifested itself in three spheres. ✓ In the economic sphere, the biggest in Russia looting of state property took place, which was one of the sources of the crisis and future conflicts aimed at its redistribution. ✓ The socio-political one was the citizens' dissatisfaction with the property, the majority of the population was firmly convinced that they were deprived of the meager social guarantees and not so much provided with the property. ✓ As for the defense industry, it was the hidden intervention of foreign capital into the military-industrial complex, in order to weaken it.

Polevanov proposed: to refrain from forced conduction of the second stage of privatization, to identify and eliminate the obvious miscalculations, to increase

attention to the management of state property and state blocks of shares, to remove from privatization management the people who are responsible for the mistakes of the first stage. His report was spread and understood in the political and scientific environment, but was not met with enthusiasm in the ruling elite. Soon the author was retired, and S.G. Belyaev was appointed to his place. A man from "Chubais' team", and the privatization course with numerous "compromises" and "consideration of Russian specifics" was continued. On July 22, 1994 the President issued a presidential decree ratifying the Basic Provisions of the State Privatization Program.

"Privatization of the state and municipal enterprises on July 1, 1994". It marked the beginning of the second, "monetary", privatization stage, which is going on up until now (2015). Since at that time the enterprises or blocks of shares were transferred exclusively for money. Privatization of property was carried out through daezhyae ovdshnichesh auctions, commercial and investment competitions, by closed subscription. The stock market was intensively developing, the system of institutional investors and the formation of the social stratum with the rights of the owner was taking shape.

However, despite the statements of the leaders of the State Control Committee about the beginning of the "Investment Era" in Russian privatization after June 1994, the situation turned out to be much more complicated. In 1996-1997 the government used privatization mainly as a means of obtaining budget revenues. It was largely conditioned by the conjunctural political circumstances. The presidential elections in

1996, and the fulfillment of obligations to the "state employees" became one of the important conditions for the preservation of the existing political rash. Besides sales, various "nonstandard" methods of privatization became widespread: "step auctions", transfer of federal shares to the regions as a coverage of the federal budget, debt conversion into securities etc. Especially wide public response was received by "collateral auctions".

In the second half of 1995, the government borrowed money from a number of banks, giving them rights on large blocks of shares of the largest state-owned objects (21 enterprises) as collateral management. This brought 5.1 trillion rubles into the budget, but it was clear to all, that the treasury could hardly find the funds to buy back shares in the second half of 1995. According to the economists of Gaidar's circle, this was in fact an uncompetitive sale of shares to interested banks (among the winners there dominated two major banks: ONEXIM and MENATEP). Many people already questioned the legitimacy of these transactions, but during the trials of 1996-1997 they were able to vindicate their legality.

However, this recognition, in the opinion of the population, testified not to the "purity" of the effected transactions, but above all to the incompleteness and imperfection of the normative base of privatization. The "economic efficiency" of the sales was also in question; after the presidential elections of 1996, the prices of their shares rose 333 times. In fact, several industrial-financial empires were created.

Some authors distinguish that since 1997 and the third

stage of privatization (after the "check" and "money"), considering its specific feature the abandonment of fiscal orientation, the transition from mass privatization to individual projects with an emphasis on the effective use of the privatized property. The beginning of the stage is associated with the new Federal Law "On Privatization of State Property and on the Basics of Privatization of Municipal Property in the Russian Federation", signed by the President on July 21, 1997. Indeed, from then on, the government and the PSI bodies drew up annual lists of enterprises for sale, which made privatization a "piecemeal" process. Now the price of the "property complex" was determined not only by its authorized capital and book value, but also by its market value. All this made it possible to sell the object at a much higher price.

The deal on the privatization of Svyazinvest, a monopolistic communications company, was a "model". In July 1997, 25 percent of its shares were sold for \$1875 million, almost twice as much as the sum received by the government in all "collateral auctions" of the second half of 1995. The leaders of the State Control Committee began talking about the beginning of "privatization of a new type" when property was transferred as a result of real competition between bidders for the highest bidder.

The purpose of privatization, in fact, has not changed: an increase in financial revenues to cover the current needs of the budget. Indeed, 1997 was the first year in the history of "monetary privatization", which was successful in terms of fulfillment of the budget assignment without "collateral auctions" type schemes.

As a result of the transformations carried out in Russia by the end of the 1990s there were radical changes in the structure of property. In 1998, state (federal, municipal) ownership accounted for 12.5% of enterprises, private ownership - 73.1%; public organizations owned 5.7%; mixed ownership accounted for 8.7% of economic entities. In 1998 the non-state sector produced more than 2/3 of GDP, the state's share capital of most enterprises ceased to play a key role. The Russian economy is characterized by a higher concentration of ownership than in developed macrosystems. There, a 5-10% stake is considered large, while in our country an outside shareholder, the largest shareholder, has an average of 26-35% of shares. Moreover, the size of the minimum package of shares for a large shareholder is not inversely proportional to the size of the economic object; on the contrary, the concentration of ownership is higher at super-large enterprises.

Privatization in Russia by the end of the 90s did not lead to the emergence of a rational system of corporate governance, did not make the behavior of enterprises market-based. That's because the state failed to stimulate production and innovation processes in enterprises, as well as fall behind in developing a comprehensive, truly effective economy aimed not only at the division of property but also focused on creating a truly competitive environment.

Summing up the results of the privatization policy of 1992-1998, and Organized Crime

This, in particular, was reflected in the appearance of a new meaning in the word "roof". Today, it is understood as informal (most often criminal) associations that have taken over and successfully perform the functions that, due to their weakness, the state is not able to perform. This is primarily a question of tax collection, ensuring the safety of citizens and businesses, and enforcing established laws.

The "roofs" can act as a parallel power coexisting with the legal one, for example, with the owners of controlling stakes in enterprises. However, the methods of action of the "roofs" are mainly criminal: blackmail, intimidation, murder of those owners and managers who violate certain "conditions" and "obligations". The "roof" can initiate legal proceedings with the participation of fictitious persons to conceal the true customers of murders, to put pressure (in various forms) on law enforcement officials in order to prevent the solving of crimes. And, as they write, the bigger the business, the more powerful the "roof" that protects it.

With the light hand of the former Minister of Finance of Russia, A. Livshits, introduced into the everyday vocabulary of politicians and businessmen the phrase "we must share". No less widespread was an informal term associated with "sharing". A consequence of the rapid transition to the market was criminalization of the social structure of Russian society, which is associated with a significant increase in the number of "risk groups" that emerged in the early 90s. These are impoverished segments of the population; a certain part of the unemployed and underemployed; "social bottom" - beggars, homeless people, former prisoners, etc. some

groups of refugees from "hot spots" in the former Soviet Union; unsettled people demobilized from the army and in a state of "post-war shock. All of these groups are capable of reproducing criminalogenic behavior and asocial morality, beyond the boundaries of the strata listed above.

1991 - 1992 years were marked by a surge in crime, the growth of which continued in the following years. Thus, in 1992 the increase in the number of offenses was more than 70% compared with the previous year. The "traditional" types of crime increased: property theft, theft of state property, hooliganism, banditry, domestic murders, rape, etc. There also appeared such crimes, almost unknown in the country before, as political terrorism, hostage-taking for ransom, contract murders, associated primarily with business activities. By 1995 there were over a thousand contract murders per year. Drug trafficking increased sharply, reaching an estimated \$2 billion per year in 1992, with an annual increase of \$1 billion, according to the Interior Ministry. Arms trafficking became widespread. Whereas at least 3,000 organized criminal groups were operating in Russia in 1991, 5,500 were reported at the end of 1994; and at the end of 1995, 6,500 of these "associations" were reported. Around 50 of them had "branches" all across the country. Groups of well-trained fighters were "under arms" at the disposal of these organizations.

About a thousand groups are organized along ethnic lines: Azerbaijani, Georgian, Chechen, Tajik, Armenian, Ossetian and others. It is difficult to judge about the exact number of "fighters" of the criminal world; there were references in the press to tens and even hundreds

of thousands. In Russian prisons and camps in the 90s, there were about a million people sentenced to various terms for various crimes, and there were not enough places for the newly convicted.

The press often published articles in which the authors sounded the alarm about the scale of criminal activity in various sectors of the economy (for example, the automotive industry, the aluminum industry) and in the regions of Russia. For example, in the Krasnoyarsk Territory, according to the newspaper *Izvestia*, in 1994, a hundred and fifty gangster groups, united into five communities, with 2,000-2,500 people in each, were operating. "They control all banks, markets, 90 percent of commercial and 40 percent of state structures. The city is divided into eight sectors. But these are not just gangs of racketeers. Now well-organized groups have invaded the field of the economy. The Krasnoyarsk Union of Commodity Producers had to declare the region "a zone unfavorable for economic development". Because of total criminalization and ubiquitous racketeering, production is curtailed and jobs are cut. Resistance is brutally crushed. During a decade, five CEOs and presidents of companies were removed. Once-underground "crims" rent offices, equipped with computers, and recruit a staff of clerks, not at all shy away from a man in a police uniform. It is the leaders of frankly bandit and semi-criminal groups who currently wield real power, which demonstrates both the strength of the criminal community and the weakness of the official authorities.

The growth of crime and criminal groups led to the emergence of such new professions as private

bodyguard and detective, which were usually combined in the framework of private security structures and agencies, whose number was also growing. Highly qualified specialists who used to work in the law enforcement system, but were unclaimed by the state in the new conditions, were also attracted to the protection of private businesses and businessmen. The scale of activity of "criminals" dictated the need for adequate response measures, a significant increase in private funding in this area (creation of security services, purchase of special equipment, etc.), which led to "creeping" militarization of society as a whole. At the same time up to 10% of private security firms operated without licenses, sometimes the concept of "protection" was interpreted quite broadly.

The shadow economy includes non-criminal kinds of entrepreneurial activity outside the system of state registration and regulation, and, as a rule, outside the sphere of fulfilling official tax obligations. It is united with the criminal economy by its selective attitude towards the existing legislation, involvement in "informal" contacts with representatives of the state apparatus, and engagement in some kinds of business (for example, in 1992-1995 the state controlled only alcoholic products manufacturing, which generated very high profit).

What distinguishes shadow economic activity from criminal economic activity is that it is mainly a socially necessary and useful activity, the legalization of which in modern Russia is hindered by political, economic, legal and other factors. The reason for the large-scale "shadowization" of economic life is that the administrative regulation of the economy, which existed

for 75 years, was replaced, if not by a complete lack of public administration, by its apparent insufficiency. As noted by the famous economist E.F. Saburov, "the state management of the economy disappeared", and no other kind of management emerged. The beginning of the transition to a market economy was not accompanied by the creation of new institutions and forms of state regulation adequate to it. Meanwhile, both domestic and foreign researchers now recognize the exceptional role of the state in providing the conditions for the functioning of a "free", market economy.

A book on the history of the development of the capitalist economy in Europe (How Did the West Become Rich? Novosibirsk, 1995) notes that "governments provided legal mechanisms to ensure repayment of loans and compliance with agreements; they determinedly defined and protected property rights, without which investment and trade were impossible; they created legal rules that met the needs of enterprises; they subsidized the construction of canals, railways and highways; sensibly or wrongly, they protected national industry with tariffs and quotas, and they created new institutions and forms of regulation. Some of the achievements of governments, such as free compulsory education and transportation systems, are marvelous.

According to many Russian economists, these tasks, universal for all democratic societies and market economies, were not solved effectively by the Russian state in the 1990s, pointing first of all to the state of the tax, monetary and banking systems and the tax service of the country. Some authors assess the situation even more harshly. Sociologist R.V. Ryvkina believes that "the

state did not turn out to be a factor of the institutional order of the Russian economy at the stage of its transition to market economy.

Shadowization of economic relations was also conditioned by the political instability that had accompanied the reforms from the very beginning. Numerous political campaigns - overcoming the consequences of the "putsch", the confrontation between the President and the Supreme Soviet, the struggle for a new Constitution, and election campaigns - all these distracted from the solution of complex economic problems and pushed them into the background. At the same time, it was often not the struggle against the overthrown classes that dominated, but the confrontation of political factions.

Experts have identified four groups of political factors that threatened the disintegration of the state in the 1990s and destabilized economic life. They were defined by the nature of interaction between: 1) legislative and executive powers; 2) central and local authorities; 3) Russia's relations with the former Soviet republics; and 4) relations among Russia's regions.

Political instability provoked what came to be called "legal mayhem," when many laws were not in effect, and citizens (executives and administrators alike) often thought it unnecessary to bind themselves to legal frameworks. The lack of the necessary and imperfections in the available instruments also limited the ability of the judicial system and the institution of prosecutorial oversight to function fully and effectively. All this made the healthy development of the economy

problematic and condemned it to retreat into the "shadow". Much attention in the literature is paid to the problems of security of citizens in the 1990s, which is associated with the changes that took place at that time with the police services.

A special role in the shadowing of the economy is attributed to the tax system operating in Russia in the 1990s. One can meet its definition as "imperfect", "flawed", "completely inadequate to the real conditions in the country", "a major obstacle to the development of enterprises, and the attracting both national and foreign investments". They point out, first, to the high level of tax rates, making it difficult to run a profitable business; second, to the hidden tax discrimination of some sectors of the economy (especially producers); third, to the vagueness and inconsistency of tax rules, which allowed their different interpretations and application. In this regard, the results of the study (a survey of managers of enterprises of various forms of ownership) conducted in 1996 by the Working Center for Economic Reforms under the Government of Russia do not seem surprising. It turned out that only 1.5% of entrepreneurs duly formalize transactions and pay all taxes. One third (33.1 percent) believed that 25 percent of transactions remain in the shadows; 29 percent of the entrepreneurs surveyed believed that "in the shadows", about 50% of transactions are made. The rest (about 36.4%) were certain that 70-90% of business transactions take place in the shadows.

Of course, there are no precise data on the scale of shadow economy. But estimates are available in the literature according to which 25 to 40% of goods and

services are produced in the Russian shadow sector. In 1994 - 1995, at least 60 million people were involved in the shadow economy as a labor force, the least of which was tax evasion. One important component of the shadow economy has been corruption, understood as the extortions citizens are forced to endure in their labor and other activities. Some politicians believe that its cause is the lack of a legal framework, and that in order to eradicate it, it is sufficient to pass a law or develop and implement some kind of anti-corruption program. Others believe that corruption in Russia is systemic and is a consequence of the growing scale of shady processes. Without minimizing it, it is hardly possible to cure the country of this disease.

Shadowization of the economy has entailed the shadowization of the entire system of social relations in which both material production and services (in the broad sense) to the population have been drawn. The spread of shadow processes into politics, law enforcement, mass media, medicine, education, and science contributes to the formation and reproduction of "shadow" stereotypes of behavior, which itself becomes an important factor in social development. The nature of the Russian economy in the mid-90s can be judged by which types of activities domestic businessmen considered most profitable. A poll conducted among them gave the following picture. Trade, especially in raw materials, currency, electronics and alcohol, was ranked first. In second place in terms of income was banking. In third place was the civil service. (This was referring to the income some officials received for "assisting" entrepreneurs. In the early 1990s, a famous politician suggested legalizing bribes, likening them to the tips that

restaurant waiters get for good service.) In fourth place in terms of profitability was brokerage. In fifth place was theft, understood as the sale of insufficiently controlled and protected resources. Sixth place on the list was occupied by real estate transactions. The seventh position was occupied by consulting services. Finally, the eighth place was taken by the production of consumer goods - industry, which is the basis of the dynamic development of the naturally developing economy.

Changes in the Social Structure

The economic transformations of the 1990s had a great impact on the social structure of society. The scale, depth and features of its transformation are determined, first, by changes in property relations, primarily the emergence of private property and the development of entrepreneurship; second, by profound changes in the employment system (planned use of labor gave way to a spontaneous labor market); third, by a decline in living standards of the vast part of the population; fourth, social anomie (destruction of one system of values and lack of formation of another) and social deprivation (limited or denied access to the material and technical means of education).

The working class, peasantry, and intelligentsia still form the basis of today's social structure. But compared with the Soviet past, their quantitative indicators and social roles have changed. New socio-structural strata have also appeared. The leading trends of social change are the deepening of inequality (economic, political, social)

and the marginalization of a large part of the population. Inequality between regions reaches a ratio of 1:10. The gap in wages in various sectors of the economy is increasing. Features of the processes of social stratification are determined by their rapidity and bipolarity: the upper strata (up to 8% of the population) are increasingly isolated from those who gravitate to the pole of poverty. This leads to hypertrophied forms of social inequality, creating within one country two Russias increasingly distant from each other. There is a process of "blurring" the boundaries of former class groups and strata, which is associated with the disappearance of the dependence between the qualitative content of labor and its pay: it is not who and how, but most importantly, where one works, that matters more. The intertwining of the former Soviet and new post-Soviet social structures in present-day Russia does not permit contemporary society to be regarded as a unified social system. In fact, it is disintegrating into separate segments or ways of life: authoritarian, oligarchic, liberal, criminal, which, in turn, have their own hierarchy, system of values, morality, and social institutions. These segments are in complex, often conflicting relations with each other.

To characterize Russian society, sociologists use multidimensional stratification models using various criteria. These include property status and income, education, position in the power structure, social status and prestige, self-identification. According to academician T.I. Zaslavskaya, the stratification model of contemporary society in Russia looks as follows: the elite (the ruling political and economic) - up to 0.5%; the upper stratum (large and medium entrepreneurs, directors of large and medium privatized enterprises,

other sub-elite groups) - 6.5%; the middle stratum (representatives of small businesses, qualified professionals, middle management, officers) - 20%; base layer (ordinary specialists, assistant specialists, workers, peasants, trade and service workers) - 60%; lower layer (low-skilled and unskilled workers, temporarily unemployed) - 7%; social "bottom" - up to 5%.

According to the level of material well-being the following strata are distinguished: rich (funds are sufficient not only to meet needs, but also to organize independent economic activity) - 7%; wealthy (funds are sufficient both for high living standards and for capital multiplication) - 7%; well-off (funds are sufficient to upgrade durable goods, improve housing conditions, own retraining and education of children, to organize vacations) - 15.8%; poor (funds are sufficient only for the rest of the population) - 6%; low-income (funds are sufficient to meet living needs and to multiply capital) - 7%; low-income (funds are sufficient to meet living conditions, to multiply capital) - 9%.

The social structure of modern Russia differs markedly from that of developed countries. What draws attention in our case is the small number of middle classes, which in all societies are seen as a cementing force. Moreover, during the 1990s Russia "lost" the middle class of intellectuals and intelligentsia (the "new" middle class) and gained the middle class of entrepreneurs (the "old" middle class).

At the same time, a large part of the Russian population was in a state of marginality, associated with the forced

transition of a person from one socio-professional group to another and a significant change in status. This included several groups: 1) skilled workers, specialists, ITR, part of the managerial corps, working in the state sector of the economy (military-industrial complex, conversion industries, closing enterprises), who had high status in the past, and now found themselves among the socially helpless;

2) representatives of small and medium business, "new" professions corresponding to market conditions ("shuttle traders", security guards, members of criminal communities, etc.), whose situation remained unstable;

3) migrants (displaced persons from conflict zones in Russia and "near abroad"). Marginalization of society is accompanied by an increase in tension, extremism, various forms of intolerance. Various types of deviant behavior are spreading: drunkenness, drug addiction, prostitution, etc.

The decline in production, unemployment, inflation, conversion, and similar causes have led to a sharp decrease in income for most of the population. Among them were people who, by previous standards, were quite well off. The "new poor" emerged, the core of whom are scientists, teachers, doctors, low-level managers, engineers. These are mostly people of a capable age. Further development of the social structure of Russian society will depend on the speed and direction of economic reforms and the state's social policy, and the population's ability to adapt to radical changes.

§ 3* Formation and Development of a New Political System. 1992-1999

The constitutional crisis deepening

January-October 1993.

The time from the end of August 1991 to December 1993 was a special period in Russian political history called the "August Republic." Its initial facet is associated with Russia's acquisition of de facto independence after the "putsch," and the latter with the political and legal formalization of new relations as a result of the referendum on the Constitution and the elections to the Duma. The "August Republic" was the initial - revolutionary - phase of the transformation of all social subsystems, and the vector of change was directed from Soviet socialism to capitalism. The years 1992-1993 were the beginning of:

in the economy - the change of forms and methods of redistribution of property,
departure of the state from the direct management of the economy;

in the social sphere - dismantling of social institutions and guarantees created during the years of the Soviet power;

in ideology - aggressive liberal expansion, aimed at changing the traditional socio-cultural stereotypes of the peoples of Russia.

However, the main events unfolded in the political sphere. In 1992-1993, the key question of any revolution was decided: the question of power. Outwardly, it took

the form of a clash between two models of its organization: a presidential and a parliamentary republic.

At the beginning of 1993, the acuteness of the conflict between the Congress of People's Deputies, on the one hand, and the RF President, on the other hand, was determined not only by the unsatisfactory results of the country's development in 1992, but also by the contradictions in the Russian constitutional system, which became particularly evident at that time. The state and political system was defined by the Constitution of 1978. However, it was greatly altered in 1990-1992 (by the summer of 1993, 320 amendments had been made to the Constitution). In 1990, the RSFSR (following the USSR) introduced a new state institution - the Congress of People's Deputies. This was done to democratize political life and governance (restrict the power of the CPSU and the party-state nomenclature). On the one hand, the Congress became the apex of the Soviet power system. According to the Constitution, it was "competent to consider and solve any issue referred to the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation". On the other hand, it was the Congress that, by the amendment to cat. 1 introduced into the Constitution a norm proclaiming the principle of separation of powers. It established a parliament functioning on a permanent basis, decided to establish a Constitutional Court, introduced the office of President, which was defined as "the highest official, the head of the executive power" of Russia. All this fundamentally changed the traditional system of Soviets, built on a combination of norm-setting, control and executive-administrative functions.

In the process of independent activity between these

four institutions (the Congress, the Supreme Soviet, the Constitutional Court, and the President), the question of the division of powers inevitably arose. And if the functions of the latter three in the system of separation of powers were clear, the congress would gradually become a rudimentary element of transitional times. By transferring its powers to the corresponding branches of power, it clearly required reorganization as having fulfilled its founding functions. All this had already been under discussion since late 1991.

Initially, the contradiction between the omnipotence of the Congress and the executive power in the person of the president was resolved through a compromise concluded at the 5th Congress of People's Deputies of the RSFSR, when they voluntarily, but temporarily (for one year) transferred some of their enormous constitutional powers to the president. This decision already had a great potential for conflict, because in his political and economic views, B.N. Yeltsin demonstrated his readiness to rely only on radical liberal forces. The beginning of the economic reforms caused a split of the protest coalition formed in 1990-1991, and by the end of 1992 the President could rely only on the consistent supporters of liberal reforms and those who benefited from them, who were in the minority. In these conditions, the congress, which expressed the interests of a wider stratum of the population, was objectively becoming an obstacle to the chosen model of reforms. This conditioned sharp attacks on it from the executive branch, which were escalating from the end of 1992 onwards.

In late 1992 - the first half of 1993, at the center of the

discussion between the supreme legislative power and the President was the question of how to form the government and, consequently, the decisive influence on the nature and methods of the economic policy pursued. The parliament's pretensions to the decisive role in determination of the Cabinet composition were based on the failures of the first stage of the reforms. It was explained by the incompetence and inability of the executive power to take into account the whole range of the existing interests in the society. The president's supporters, on the other hand, viewed events in a broader historical context.

In contrast to the approaches of 1988 - mid-1991, when the transition from socialism ("totalitarianism") to democracy was seen as a relatively painless and time-limited act, in late 1991 - 1993, the situation was analyzed in a completely different way. The notion that between totalitarianism and democracy, a fairly long period of transition to a "dictatorship of democracy" ("democracy") was inevitable, in which new values and norms would be asserted. Taking into account that not everybody understood the meaning and direction of the changes taking place in society, and that there was also a resistance (conscious or spontaneous) to the unusual measures applied, it seemed that the "dictatorship of democracy" had to be implemented in the form of authoritarian rule. This "enlightened authoritarianism" in the Russian context was associated with the concentration of power resources in the hands of the President, who, through his consistent struggle against "totalitarian" structures in 1987-1991, had proved his devotion to democratic ideals and demonstrated his readiness to defend them with determination.

In 1993, the parties used different arguments to justify their right to determine the content and methods of reforms. Proponents of the supreme legislative power and the Constitutional Court emphasized adherence to the "letter of the law", insisting on compliance with the existing laws and the Constitution. The president's supporters stressed its "socialist origins" and drew attention to the gaps and contradictions it contained. In their disputes with opponents, they used political law arguments, focusing on the "spirit of law" and interpreting "law as justice. In this regard, the president's supporters directly questioned the "constitutionality of the Constitution". The great legitimacy of the president's policies was associated with his direct election on June 12, 1991, and also with the victory of the "August Democratic Revolution" in Russia. Lawyers from the president's circle attributed special importance to the fact that Yeltsin had been popularly elected, since in their opinion, not only a person who was the head of the executive branch, but a politician with a definite political and economic program, which was sanctified by the results of the popular vote. According to this logic, the congress and the Constitution had a lower level of legitimacy, since they appeared earlier, under the conditions of the "bygone socialist order. On this basis, formally anti-constitutional measures to restrict the activities of the congress, which allegedly corresponded to the "spirit of the popular will", were considered quite legitimate. Hence, there was also a temptation to interpret the legal norms in terms of political expediency. The imperfection of the existing Constitution in early 1993 was recognized by both opposing sides, although they saw a way out of the crisis in different ways. Most of

the Peoples' Deputies - their position was expressed by R. I. Khasbulatov, the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet - proceeded from the point of view that there was no urgent need to adopt a new Constitution, it was necessary to continue the gradual introduction of amendments to the existing Constitution that would make it a real democratic one. In their opinion, the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet objectively played a stabilizing role, therefore the new Constitution should be developed under their aegis and adopted at one of the congress sessions.

The deputies were strongly opposed by the presidential side. It was actively developing the thesis that "Soviets and democracy are incompatible", that "the last bastions of totalitarianism and partiocracy" should be abolished, and a fundamentally new political system created. That is why the adoption of a new Constitution is an urgent and most important task for contemporary Russia, without which it is impossible to work on its in-depth reforms. It was obvious that the President's ideas would not find support in the deputy corps, and the resulting Constitution would not be approved by the Congress. That is why the presidential side attached the utmost importance to holding a referendum either on the main provisions of the new Constitution, or on trust in the branches of power. The interpretation of the results in both cases could be used for the constitutional fixation of their ideas or as a justification for possible "non-standard actions". Both opposite sides were ready for resolute political battles which the country witnessed in spring-autumn of 1993.

The VIII Congress of People's Deputies which

assembled on March 10, 1993 rejected a number of compromise agreements of the previous one, which also included an agreement to hold a referendum. In response to that, the President made an Appeal to the citizens of Russia on March 20, saying that he had signed the Decree on the special order of governing the country until the crisis was over. It set April 25 for a vote of confidence in the president and vice president, as well as drafts of a new constitution and a law on elections to the Federal Parliament. If the president and his drafts were approved, the new Constitution and Law would enter into force, and the Congress and Supreme Soviet would automatically lose their powers.

The Constitutional Court, convened in an emergency session on March 22, found that the President's actions were inconsistent with Article 9 of the Basic Law. The court's verdict summoned the ninth (extraordinary) congress, which on March 26th, evaluated the incident as an attempt of a coup d'etat and *decided to impeach Yeltsin, the president*. The president refused in advance to submit to a possible negative decision of the congress. Speaking to his supporters at Vasilyevsky Spusk near the Kremlin on March 28, he said: "It is not for them, these six hundred, to decide Russia's fate. I will not submit, I will submit to the will of the people. As it later became known, in case of a positive impeachment vote, the presidential side had a scenario of a forced "breakup" with the congress immediately after the announcement of the election results. However, the president could not be removed from power: the opposition gathered 617 votes instead of the required 689, and 268 deputies voted against his removal, (Impeachment defeated). The deputies and the

president reached a new compromise: a referendum was scheduled for April 25, which would have allowed both the president and the Supreme Soviet to be elected prematurely.

Four questions were put to a referendum:

Do you trust the RF President Boris Yeltsin?

Do you approve of the social and economic policy pursued by the President and the Government since 1992?

Do you think it is necessary to hold early elections of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation?

(And a fourth one?)

Forty million people gave a positive answer to the first question (negative - 27%), to the second - 36% (against - 31%), to the third - 34% (against - 32%) and to the fourth - 47% (against - 21%). The scale was tilting in the president's favor, to a large extent due to the dominance of his team on the information field. The voting results looked more preferable for Yeltsin, although *it is difficult to call it an absolute victory*. They indicated, above all, a deep split in society. The president and his supporters failed to get a majority in almost half of the republics and regions of Russia. The vote of confidence in the deputies looked even less consoling. In addition, only 69 million (about 65%) of the 107 million Russians who had the right to vote used the ballot papers. This meant that only 37% of eligible voters expressed confidence in the president.

Nevertheless, his supporters were talking about their victory, and some of them believed that the president could also use the power structures in resolving acute conflict situations. The test of power took place as early

as May 1, 1993 in Moscow. Here, during a demonstration, which brought together significant but disparate opposition forces, there was a clash with riot police, which led to bloodshed. A total of 579 people sought medical attention. Yeltsin qualified the incident as an attempt by "an extremist communist minority... to impose methods of political violence on the country. Khasbulatov, on the other hand, stated that the clash occurred between "a broad alliance of anti-mafia forces and mafia representatives of the authorities and their high patrons, (Yeltsin's provocateurs). As a result, the opposition demonstrations of May 9, 1993, were not only massive, but also organized.

The referendum results allowed the president to intensify the constitutional process according to his own scenario. For this purpose, by his decree of May 12, 1993, he decreed the creation of a Constitutional Convention, which was convened on June 5, 1993.

On June 5, 1993, the Constitutional Council started its work. It was supposed to finalize the draft prepared by the supporters of a strong presidential power. The carefully prepared composition (762 people) was intended to demonstrate that all levels of Russian power (federal, regional, and local), all branches (legislative, executive, and judicial), as well as parties, movements, trade unions, entrepreneurs and commodity producers, representatives of faiths, and the Academy of Sciences were represented. Participants of the meeting, however, did not see any possibility for constructive interaction with the Constitutional Commission of the Congress of People's Deputies, which has developed a draft with a more balanced division of power between its branches.

The unpreparedness to work together was also evident in the fact that the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, who took the rostrum of the meeting, was "slammed" and did not get in a word. As a result, by the end of June 1993 there were three different projects of Constitution: "presidential", "parliamentary" ones, and also the one suggested by Russian Communists. On July 12, 1993, the draft finalized by the Assembly was in the hands of the President.

The meeting revealed that the conflict between the executive and representative powers was superimposed on others - between the center and the provinces, as well as between the "sovereign" republics, on the one hand, and the Russian territories and regions, on the other. The republics stubbornly tried to preserve the sovereign status they had won and to give the federation a contractual rather than a constitutional character. The territories and oblasts, on the other hand, were stepping up their attempts to raise their status to that of republics. The latent contradictions that existed under the surface came to the surface at the meeting. On July 1, the regional council of Yekaterinburg decided to form the Urals Republic precisely in the course of the meeting's work. The explanation of this step by Governor E. Rossel: "All oblasts and republics are equally economically independent. But where is the equality if the region pays a 50% tax on profits, and the constituent territories of the Federation pay 12-20%. Residents of the republics are more socially protected than residents of the regions". It was difficult for the central government to take such differing interests into account in equal measure; it had to strike a balance, because both branches of government needed the political support of

the regions. Yeltsin's initiative to create the Federation Council (August 13, 1993), which at his suggestion included two members, one from the representative branch, one from the executive branch, from each subject of the Russian Federation, was preconditioned by the desire to attract regional elites to his side. The Kremlin spin doctors were ready to propose the Federation Council as a "legitimate body," an alternative to the current parliament.

After the Constitutional Council had received the draft Constitution "needed" by the President on July 12, 1993, the problem of adopting the Constitution was put into practice. The realization was the complexity of this program. On the one hand, the President's awareness of the problem, and his readiness to come out of the constitutional crisis, on the other hand, what was apparent in his speech as early as June 12. On that day, Boris Yeltsin told the journalists that he intended to add one more variant to the existing ones, about which "it is too early to speak now".

July 1993 was relatively quiet, but in August, the political tension was growing with each passing day. Since the beginning of the month, detailed scenarios of violent actions appeared in the central printed media, the intention of which was attributed to both the presidential and parliamentary sides. Nobody officially confirmed them, but nobody refuted them either. On August 10, Yeltsin interrupted his vacation and came back to Moscow, and on the same day, at the meeting of the Presidential Council in a narrow circle he openly declared that *"the unsettled question of the Constitution lead us to the use of force"*.

On August 12, he held a meeting with media executives, the significance of which went far beyond information policy. The president said that "a plan of action is already prepared. By all indications, the real political skirmish will come in September. August is a time of artillery preparation, including for the media." He later added that September would require a "strong security minister. This quality, according to his advisers, was not possessed by then-Minister V.P. Barannikov, for which he was dismissed. The new minister was N. M. Golushko. Psychological pressure was also put on the Constitutional Court and its chair.

There were increasingly harsh political accusations coming from the president and the speaker of the parliament. The credibility of both branches of government was substantially weakened by the publication of large-scale abuses in the higher echelons. This motivated Yeltsin to issue a decree on September 1, temporarily dismissing Vice President V. Rutskoy and the first vice-premier V.F. Shumeyko "in connection with the damage inflicted on the state power as a result of mutual accusations of corruption." On August 20, 1993 the president straightforwardly addressed the deputies of the Supreme Soviet with a proposal "to discuss the terms and order of holding early parliamentary elections". Ten days later the "proposal" was backed with a favorite "firm" gesture: Yeltsin made a trip to the Taman and Kantemirov divisions. The demonstration of the president's political will in the media, against a background of tank firing, airborne troops, and demonstrative hand-to-hand combat, was clearly targeted. In early September, the press published

articles stating that Russia was not ready for "broad" democracy and "excessive parliamentarianism. At the same time, references to General de Gaulle's regime and the experience of the Fifth Republic in overcoming the internal political crisis became particularly popular.

Political Crisis September 21-October 4, 1993.

On September 16, the president visited the division of internal troops named after F. E. Dzerzhinsky. During his visit, he announced the return of Ye.T. Gaidar to the government as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy, which was an open challenge to the deputy corps. In response, on September 18, the All-Russian Meeting of People's Deputies of all levels adopted an anti-presidential Appeal to the citizens of Russia, in which it appeals "with special sensitivity to the personnel of the army, police and state security agencies". The situation becomes so heated that the members of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet decided to spend the night of September 20 in the White House. They stated that they had decided to do it, because "there were movements of military units and suspicious gatherings of the Interior Ministry's administration".

Finally, on September 21, at 8 p.m., Yeltsin made a TV address, asking the citizens of Russia to "support their president at this critical time for the country", and then his decree No. 1400 on "gradual constitutional reform in the Russian Federation" was read. The president decreed: *to suspend the legislative, administrative and supervisory functions of the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet, and, until the election*

of a new parliament, to be governed by presidential decrees and government resolutions. The sessions of the congress were prohibited, and the authority of the people's deputies of Russia was terminated, although the representative bodies in the regions retained their authority. The Constitutional Court was "proposed" not to convene sessions before the new parliament began its work. Election to the State Duma were scheduled for December 11-12, 1993. By that time the Constitutional Commission and the Constitutional Assembly were supposed to present a single agreed draft of the Constitution. The right to appoint the Prosecutor General was transferred to the president. All of this meant that the country was in fact undergoing direct presidential rule, which was not stipulated by law. Realizing that the decree was not legally "flawless," the president said that for him "the security of Russia and its people is more important than formal compliance with outdated norms. The decree was backed up by a series of "organizational" measures.

An information blockade was established on the White House. The mass media, especially the electronic media, were giving only the president's version of events. *As early as September 21, government and then city telephones were turned off in the parliament building.* At the same time, trucks with police were rushed to the building. *On September 25 they blocked all the approaches to the building. The electricity and elevators were turned off, the supply of hot and cold water was cut off, and the sewage system stopped working.* On September 27, rumors began to circulate about the impending storming of the Supreme Soviet residence.

On September 28 the blockade tightened: the building was surrounded by spiral wire fencing, all entrances and exits were taken under control. By evening the evacuation of employees from the American embassy buildings adjacent to the parliament was completed. Supporters of deputies were "met" by police and riot police on the far approaches to the White House, which led to the inevitable clashes, initially small, with the forces of law and order. On the evening of September 21, following the TV address by the president, a great number of lawmakers began streaming into the White House. Those who had already gone home were also summoned to Moscow.

The guards of the building began to issue machine guns and bulletproof vests, and the leadership of its defense was entrusted to A.V. Rutsky. The Constitutional Court, which had gathered for an emergency session, declared Decree No. 1400 illegal by midnight. This was done on the basis of Article 121-6 of the Constitution, which read: "The powers of the President of the Russian Federation may not be used to change the national-state structure of the Russian Federation, to dissolve or suspend the activities of any legally elected bodies of state power, otherwise they are terminated immediately." The Supreme Council, which gathered for an emergency session, based on the decision of the Constitutional Court, assessed the president's act as a coup d'etat. In this regard, his powers were terminated from 20. 00 on September 21, and the presidential duties were to be performed by Vice-President A.V. Rutsky.

The session of the Supreme Court decided to convene

an emergency (extraordinary) congress of People's Deputies, the resolution "On urgent measures to overcome the coup d'etat" and "On informing the international community about the situation in Russia". Amendments to the Criminal Code were also adopted, which increased the penalties for actions aimed at forcibly changing the constitutional order.

On the evening of September 23, the X (extraordinary) Congress of People's Deputies began its work. He approved V. A. Achalov as the Minister of Defense, V. P. Barannikov as the Minister of Security, and A. V. Dunaev as the Minister of Internal Affairs. A number of appeals were made to the world community, as well as to the citizens of Russia (to compatriots, Muscovites, workers, young people, the personnel of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, to the soldiers of the army and navy), which explained the current situation and contained proposals for changing it. Work has begun on forming a new government. There was a dangerous situation of dual power in the country, and "competitive" law-making began: The Congress adopted the law "On the procedure for adopting the Constitution" and other acts that went against the decrees of the President. The situation copied the "duel of decrees" of the period of the political crisis of August 19-21, 1991. Twice — on September 22 and 29-Patriarch Alexy II appealed to the conflicting parties to prevent bloodshed.

By September 24, the actions of the president were condemned, and the decisions of the Supreme Council and the congress were supported by 57 (out of 89) regional and republican Councils of Russia. Another 7 regional councils took a neutral and wait-and-see

position. Deep dissatisfaction with the situation was also evident in the army, whose leadership, however, sought to avoid its involvement in a political conflict. On September 30, a rally of employees of the Central Office of the Ministry of Security, the Department of Military Counterintelligence for the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as the Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for Moscow and the Moscow Region was held on Lubyanskaya Square in Moscow. Its participants condemned the Decree No. 1400 and the subsequent actions for its implementation, demanded that the Board of the Ministry of Internal Affairs contact the leadership of other power ministries to develop measures for a civilized way out of the critical situation.

Realizing the vulnerability of his proposal to re-elect only the parliament, Yeltsin on September 23 signed a decree on new elections, already for the president, which were scheduled for June 12, 1994. The idea of simultaneous re-elections of the parliament and the president was often heard in those days, because in the view of many, both sides contributed to the escalation of the crisis. According to public opinion polls, 63% of respondents did not trust the president, and 71% did not trust the congress. On September 25, representatives of moderate forces (V. D. Zorkin, G. A. Yavlinsky, S. Yu. Glazyev, A. P. Vladislavlev) proposed a "zero" way out of the crisis, that is, a "zero" option. a return to the status quo prior to the promulgation of Decree No. 1400, followed by simultaneous presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for December 12, 1993. The same proposal was made by representatives of 30 regions of Russia, who gathered in St. Petersburg (they were called the "St. Petersburg thirty"). On September 30, a meeting

of representatives of state authorities of 62 federal subjects was held in Moscow, which demanded to lift the blockade of the House of Soviets, censorship on television, and to cancel Decree No. 1400 and the subsequent acts. The participants of the meeting also insisted on holding simultaneous early elections of the new parliament and the president no later than the first quarter of 1994. At the same time, the organization of elections and control over them would be entrusted not to the central structures, but to the Council of the Subjects of the Federation. The document contained a warning about the readiness to take "all necessary measures of economic and political influence to ensure the restoration of constitutional legality in full". The regions, however, failed to seize the initiative and direct the situation in the desired direction.

On September 30, at the initiative and mediation of the Patriarch, an attempt was made to reconcile the conflicting parties at the St. Danilov Monastery in Moscow. Negotiations began between representatives of the president and the parliament, which ended without result. According to modern researchers, the presidential party was set on a course for the final victory. The presence of weapons in places of confrontation between supporters of the president and the Supreme Council, provocations and the lack of responsibility of some *politicians led to bloodshed at the Moscow City Hall on October 3, and especially mass-at the Ostankino TV complex. These events served as a reason for the president to introduce a state of emergency in Moscow and go on the offensive.* At 6: 45 on October 4, the assault on the White House began, and at 9: 00 it was shelled by tanks. By 17 o'clock, the building was seized,

and the leadership of the parliament and its defenders were transferred to the Lefortovo prison. On the same day, the publication of Pravda, Sovetskaya Rossiya, Rabochaya Tribune and twelve other opposition publications was suspended for a month.

According to official data, 145 people were killed in the tragic events. However, the Russian and foreign press cited many times the large numbers of dead and missing. (Must mean that Yeltsin murdered 145 congressmen or their aids?) Responding to related questions, one of the Interior Ministry leaders later said: "We, frankly, did not expect such a stir around the corpses. (Were they tripping over them.)? ? If they had assumed it, they would have deliberately counted them later." Today, what happened in September-October 1993. historians regard as limited in time and space an episode of the Civil War, which, fortunately, was limited to a top-level struggle for power in the capital. It did not spread to other regions of the country and did not lead to a large-scale clash of those social forces whose interests were objectively represented by the President and the Supreme Council.

The President and the executive structures led by him were supported by those groups that became active participants in the redistribution of power and property after August 1991. On the side of the People's Deputies, on the contrary, there were heterogeneous strata that had lost a lot during the years of reforms, felt "humiliated and insulted" as a result of the shock "treatment" of the economy. And although the "victims" were 2-4 times more numerous than their more successful fellow citizens, the outcome of the collision was predetermined

by other factors. As it has happened before in times of revolutionary upheaval, the minority managed to achieve a power advantage over the majority in the decisive place and at the decisive hour. The events of September 21 — October 4, 1993 also convincingly confirmed that proactive political behavior and political will are far from abstract historical categories.

After the end of the acute phase of the crisis, the President noted with satisfaction that "the period of dual power in Russia is over". The events of October 1993 opened up new prospects for economic transformation. "A powerful impetus has been given to the constitutional reform and deep transformations of the Russian statehood." V. D. Zorkin, who became the former Chairman of the Constitutional Court, assessed their meaning differently: "On October 3-4, 1993, they will enter into the history of Russia as one of its darkest pages. On this day, not only the dual power was ended, but also the triple power, that is, the constitutional principle of the separation of powers. In fact, the president has committed an unconstitutional coup, destroyed the state system."

The president's autumn offensive would hardly have been possible without political support from the West. Already on September 22, Boris Yeltsin called Bill Clinton and informed him about what was happening in Moscow; contacts between the Russian and American authorities did not stop throughout the crisis. On October 5, the day after the events of October 3-4, US Secretary of State K. Christopher stated that " *President Yeltsin had no choice but to use force. His actions were fully justified. He continues to follow the democratic course.*"

And the next day, at a press conference, B. Clinton himself spoke in support of the actions of the Russian president.

Until mid-December 1993, Russia remained without a supreme representative and legislative power. Many important aspects of Russian life were regulated by presidential decrees. Boris Yeltsin took advantage of the current situation to legally consolidate the victory achieved in early October. A symbolic gesture designed to demonstrate the meaning of what happened was the removal of the guard of honor at the Lenin Mausoleum on October 6. Following this, in October—November 1993, Boris Yeltsin signed a number of important decrees that determined the future fate of the Soviets. On October 7, the powers of the Moscow City and District Councils were terminated. On October 24, a decree was signed on the reform of state and local self-government bodies in Moscow and the Moscow Region: elections in the capital region were proposed to be held on December 12, 1993. Finally, the decree of October 26 "On the Reform of local Self-Government in the Russian Federation" terminated the activities of all local councils. Their functions were transferred to the administration appointed by the President. Elections of new local self-government bodies (dumas, assemblies, municipal committees, etc.), as well as heads of local self-government (heads of administrations, elders, mayors) were to be held from December 1993 to June (1994). Thus, the Soviet power ended its existence 76 years after its proclamation in Russia.

On October 27, 1993, the President signed a decree "On the regulation of land relations and the development of

agrarian reform in Russia". He summarized the previously adopted "indisputable" acts on the agrarian reform; proclaimed the diversity of forms of land ownership; equality of forms of management based on personal, family or collective work. The independence of rural commodity producers was emphasized and at the same time the state was declared support for farmers in the transition period to the market. However, the main thing was that the decree radically resolved the issue of land ownership: in the document, it was equated with ordinary real estate, property that was allowed to sell, buy, rent, or give away. The State guaranteed the inviolability and protection of private land ownership. This formally "market-economic" decision caused a loud political response and polar assessments from various social forces.

The Presidential Decree of November 6, 1993 put into effect a new Military Doctrine of Russia, which was to play an important role in consolidating new socio-political relations. It defined the main tasks and directions of reforming the Armed Forces. Emphasizing the need to maintain and improve the combat readiness of the army, the document aimed to create a cheaper, compact, well-equipped army that meets the highest modern standards. The reorganization of the structure of the Armed Forces was planned to be completed by 2000. By the same time, it was supposed to switch to a mixed system of their recruitment. Along with maintaining conscription on an extraterritorial basis, the most important role in the army was to be played by professionals serving under contract. By 1995, the number of the Armed Forces was to be reduced to 1.9 million people (in 1993 it was 3 million).

In the doctrine, for the first time in domestic legislative practice, the executive power in the person of the president and the government was given the right to use the army in solving not only external, but also internal political problems. Among the "internal sources of military threats", the doctrine included not only "attempts to overthrow the constitutional system, disorganization of the functioning of state authorities and management", but also all kinds of internal political actions of "nationalist, separatist, and other organizations". Even then, the foreign policy part of it was criticized for underestimating its own national interests. When reading the document, the idea was created of a greater priority for Russia for common goals with the international community. This feeling was fueled by the current Concept of Foreign Policy (January 1993), where the tasks of strengthening partnership relations with Western countries and international institutions were also put in the foreground.

The state symbols of the country have also changed. Back in 1990, Russia found its own anthem, created on the basis of the "Patriotic Song" by M. I. Glinka. After the events of August-91, the white-blue-red flag was used as the state flag. And on November 30, 1993, by presidential decree, the former State Emblem of the RSFSR — with a hammer and sickle, wheat ears — was replaced by a new one. They again as before 1917, became a double-headed eagle. Thus, the elements that connected the country with the 76-year period of Soviet history disappeared from the state symbols of the country.

Elections to the Federal Assembly and the adoption of a new Constitution.

In October 1993 the conditions for holding parliamentary elections and adopting a new Constitution have been adjusted. On October 1, a presidential decree increased the number of members of the State Duma from 400 to 450 deputies, and established an equal distribution of seats between those elected according to the majority and proportional (through party lists) systems (225 to 225). Thus, the initial plans were "clarified", according to which 2/3 of the seats were to be received by the deputies-"majoritarians". Formally, this was intended to encourage the formation of a normal multi-party system in the country. In fact, the increase in the number of deputies - "listers" increased the chances of electing already "promoted" politicians at the federal level, who had access to the media (primarily television), which depended on the executive branch.

The Decree of October 11 "On Elections to the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation" also made significant changes to Decree No. 1400. Initially, on December 11-12, elections were scheduled only for the State Duma — the lower house of parliament, and the role of the upper one was to be played by a body formed shortly before the dissolution of the congress and called the Federation Council (it included the heads of the Russian regions). Now the electoral principle of forming the upper chamber was introduced: two deputies were elected from each region of the Federation on the basis of a majority system in two — member (one district-two deputies) electoral districts. The two candidates with the highest

number of votes became deputies.

Decree No. 1400 assumed that the new Constitution would be approved by the newly elected Parliament. To change this provision, the Presidential Decree of October 15 provided for a nationwide vote on the new Basic Law on December 12. This made it possible to avoid possible complications in the event of the election of a Duma that was not sufficiently loyal to the president. To finalize the draft Constitution, which was approved on July 12, the State Chamber of the Constitutional Conference was formed, consisting of representatives of the President, the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, and the Constitutional Court, and The Supreme Arbitration Court, and the Prosecutor General's Office. Together with the Public Chamber established on September 24, the State Chamber of the Constitutional Conference completed the preparation of the document, and on November 15 it was published for wide discussion. In the "November" draft of the Constitution, the rights of the president were expanded even in comparison with his own proposals of the spring-summer of 1993. Answering a related question from journalists, Yeltsin said: *"I will not deny the powers of the president in the project is really significant. What did you want? In a country accustomed to kings or leaders; in a country where there are no clear groups of interests, where their bearers are not defined, where normal parties are just beginning to emerge; in a country where executive discipline is extremely weak, where legal nihilism is rampant - in such a country, do you make a mark only, or mainly on the parliament? In six months, if not sooner, people will demand a dictator. And such a dictator will quickly be found, I assure you, and perhaps*

in the same parliament."

Of fundamental importance was the introduction of amendments to the Law on the Referendum, which provided for a threshold of 50% of the votes of the total number of eligible citizens for making decisions on constitutional issues. Now a threshold of 50% of the number of voters who voted was set, and the referendum was called a "popular vote".

In mid-October, the election campaign was gaining momentum. Its conditions were determined by presidential decrees, and opposition politicians were faced with a dilemma: either to refuse to participate, recognizing the elections as illegal, or to accept the proposed rules of the game. Most of them followed the second path. The "winners" tried to form a new, acceptable party-political configuration in the parliament, and in October—November, the formation of new parties and movements was in full swing, which had to compete with the existing ones. The politicians who called themselves democrats decided to go to the elections in different party "columns". "By breaking away, we are self-organizing and can use some of the energy of the opposition. It is illiterate to give this capital to the irreconcilable, said G. A. Yavlinsky. A number of parties and movements were created to represent the interests of certain groups of the population (regional, environmental, women's, youth), focusing them on constructive interaction with the executive power.

The Central Election Commission registered the lists of 13 parties and movements that collected the necessary number of signatures of voters to participate in the

elections. The "Choice of Russia" bloc united supporters of continuing radical liberal reforms. It includes entrepreneurs united by the All-Russian Association of Privatized and Private Enterprises, a number of small democratic parties, some creative unions, as well as members of the government and the presidential administration. This gave reason to consider the bloc as the main "party of power". The bloc acted under the motto: "Freedom, property, legality", and was headed by Deputy Prime Minister E. T. Gaidar. Election posters with his image were accompanied by the words: On October 17, representatives of 72 regions of Russia established the Party of Russian Unity and Accord (PRES), which formed the basis of the idea of developing federalism and local self-government. We spoke under the motto "In unity and harmony-towards a renewed Russia". The party was headed by Deputy Prime Minister of the Government, Minister of Ethnic Affairs and Regional Policy S. M. Shahrav. Declaring that it unites professional managers, the party declared that it is neither pro-government nor opposition.

At the same time, the Yabloko electoral bloc was created, named after the first letters of the names of the founders and leaders (G. A. Yavlinsky, Yu.Yu. Boldyrev, V. P. Lukin). He spoke under the motto "Dignity, Order, Justice", aimed at building a civil society and a state governed by the rule of law in Russia, taking into account the historical and cultural characteristics of the country; ensuring economic and political freedoms of citizens; creating an effective, socially oriented market economy. The bloc declared itself as a democratic opposition to Boris Yeltsin, although its activists supported the president in the 1991-1993 conflicts. The

political movement "Women of Russia" was also created (leader A.V. Fedulova), the youth movement "The Future of Russia — new names" (leader V. V. Laschevsky), the "constructive and ecological movement " Cedar".

The Communist Party of the Russian Federation, which was re-established in February 1993, was promoted to the role of the main opposition political force. In the election campaign, they advocated a non-violent return of the country to the socialist path of development. In economic terms, they insisted on the formation of a multi-structured market economy with effective state regulation and active social policy; in the political sphere, they set the task of "ridding Russia of the ruling political regime by legal methods". Headed by G. N. Seleznev, The Communist Party of the Russian Federation has become the most widespread public association, with more than 500 thousand members in its ranks.

The Agrarian Party of Russia (leader M. I. Lapshin), which was also established in February 1993, acted as an ally of the Communist Party in the opposition. It considered it its duty to defend the interests of both the agro-industrial complex as a whole, and mainly those of its employees who are associated with enterprises of collective ownership - former collective farms and state farms, which became joint-stock companies during the reform years (the interests of farmers were taken up by the Peasant Party of Russia, headed by Yu. D. Chernichenko, who was part of the "Choice of Russia"). The Agrarian Party opposed private ownership of land, supported a gradual transition to market relations, and supported state support for the agro-industrial complex.

The Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), established as the LDP of the USSR, claimed to be the third force that acted from a statesmanlike, national-patriotic position — ; Back in 1990. they advocated the revival of the Russian state within the borders of the USSR, a strong presidential republic with a regulated and socially oriented market economy. In the election campaign, they sharply raised the problems of the army, the protection of the rights of the Russian-speaking population in the republics of the former Soviet Union, the situation of refugees from inter-ethnic conflict zones. The popularity of the LDPR was largely due to the personality of its leader V. V. Zhirinovskiy, who proved himself as a bright populist speaker, able to attract the sympathies of a fairly wide number of voters, primarily "disadvantaged" ones, with his targeted appeals.

The Duma elections held on December 12 gave the following picture. According to the party lists, the LDPR won 59 out of 225 seats, the Choice of Russia and the Communist Party — 40 each, the Agrarian Party — 21, Women of Russia — 21, Yabloko — 20, PRES — 18, and the Democratic Party of Russia (DPR) — 14. At the same time, 7% of the ballots were declared invalid, and 17% of the voters voted against all the candidates, which indicated that a fairly large part of them were dissatisfied with the government and all political forces. In total, out of 450 seats in the Duma (including those elected and by territorial districts), the Choice of Russia received 96, the LDPR — 70, the Communist Party — 65, and the Agrarian Party — 47 deputy mandates. According to the official Kremlin version, the "democrats" lost the election, and the success of the LDPR was attributed to the "democratic immaturity" of the Russian

people. However, this statement needs to be clarified. In fact, the pro-government "Choice of Russia" received much less support than expected. At the same time, in general, the Democrats — "Choice of Russia", PRES, "Yabloko" and the DPR — "took" their votes, even increasing the overall share of representation in comparison with the previous parliament.

As for the "LDPR phenomenon", political scientists attributed it to the Kremlin's own miscalculations. It was claimed that this party was chosen as a "sparring partner" of the "Choice of Russia", and the "extravagant" manners and harsh statements of its leader were supposed to favorably set off the balance and respectability of the "Gaidar" candidates. This was the reason why Zhirinovsky was given an incomparable amount of airtime, which largely determined the success of his party. However, the rejection of the reformers on the part of the voters was stronger, and they protested for a new figure, not connected with the current government, despite all its originality. In comparison with the dissolved Supreme Council, the State Duma has not become less oppositional. Most of the deputies were very critical of the supreme executive power. Much more depoliticized and "reserved" were the members of the upper house of the Federal Assembly — the Federation Council with a considerable representation of the ruling regional elite. They were more interested in constructive interaction with the central authorities. In all cases, for the president and the government, the highest representative and legislative body of Russia could no longer be a "brake on reforms", since, according to the adopted Constitution, it had rather limited powers.

The new Basic Law was approved in a referendum by 58.4% of those who took part in the vote (32.3-of the total number of voters in the country). The president himself considered the adoption of the new Constitution to be the main result of the will expressed on December 12. "The final line under the Soviet communist regime has been drawn, an important step has been taken into the future" — this is how B. N.Yeltsin assessed the meaning of what had happened. It detailed the principles of the structure of the new Russian state. The Constitution proclaimed that Russia was "a democratic federal state with a republican form of government." The document also contained the provision that it is a social state, designed to create conditions for decent human development; it pointed out the secular nature of the republic, where none of the religions are state-owned. The extensive section on human and civil rights and freedoms, which was designed in full compliance with the norms of international law, was of the greatest importance. It contained a list of economic and social guarantees of citizens that the state assumed. An important point of the Constitution was that it assumed the equalization of the status of the territories, regions and republics: all of them became "subjects of the Federation", united into a state not on the basis of treaties, but on the basis of a common Constitution.

For politicians, the most significant was the section that established the principle of separation of powers and a new balance of powers between its branches. The transformation of Russia into a "super-presidential" republic was becoming obvious. Most of the real prerogatives were transferred from the legislature to the President. It determines the main directions of domestic

and foreign policy, approves the military doctrine, appoints all members of the government (with the exception of the chairman) without the consent of the parliament, a referendum and elections of the State Duma. The President gains real control over the appointment of top state officials, submits candidates to the Duma and the Federation Council for the post of Chairman of the Central Bank, judges of the Constitutional, Supreme, and Supreme Arbitration Courts, and the Prosecutor General. Previously, the initiator of such appointments was the legislative branch. The government was effectively removed from the control of the parliament, and a decisive role in its formation was assigned to the president, who not only appoints the head of government, but also gets the right to dissolve the State Duma in the event of resistance by the parliament (three-fold rejection of presidential candidates or parliamentary distrust of the government).

Under these conditions, the president and the government were able to pursue a political course without looking back at the parliament. In turn, deprived of responsibility and the ability to influence the government, the State Duma was tempted to strengthen the populist component in its legislative activities, which could complicate the work of the Cabinet of Ministers. Under the new Constitution, the Parliament lost the right to suspend or revoke a presidential decree; on the contrary, the President gained the ability to suspend certain legal acts. The general form provided for the possibility of removing him from office, but the defining procedure made it illusory. Thus, the balance of powers between the branches of government was essentially not fixed.

All this gave grounds to political scientists to assert that at the end of 1993, a special "non-systemic political regime of Boris Yeltsin" (I. M. Klyamkin) was established in Russia; some call this regime an "elective monarchy" (L. F. Shevtsova). Academician P.V. Volobuev proposed another term — "the fourth-October political system" - by analogy with the "third-June system" (1907), which emerged in Russia after the dispersal of the State Duma.

In the conditions of concentration of the main powers in the hands of the president, the role of persons who formed his ideas about what was happening in the country, acted as assistants and advisers, objectively increased. At the same time, the support of the regime of personal power and the conductor of the president's policy inevitably became the state apparatus and the top of the bureaucracy. In November—December 1993, Yeltsin demonstrated his willingness to take into account the interests of this stratum. In November, the Office of Presidential Affairs was created, which took care of the entire political elite of the country. His "clients" were 12 thousand. high dignitaries. They were both parliamentarians, supreme judges, and heads of the Accounting Chamber, but the main backbone was made up of high-ranking civil servants (about 10 thousand people). On December 22, Yeltsin signed a decree that placed federal officials in a special category with their own charter and a preferential system of financial, medical, household and other support.

Socio-political development of Russia in 1994-mid-1996

The adoption of the new Constitution and the elections of December 12, 1993 contributed to the formation of political and legal certainty in the state system of Russia, opened up opportunities for all branches of government to concentrate on solving creative tasks. The desire to reduce tension and stability was reflected in a number of events in the first half of 1994. In February, the State Duma decided to grant amnesty to the participants of the events of August-91 and October 3-4, 1993 in Moscow. On April 28, 1994, at the initiative of the Kremlin the *"Agreement on public consent"*. The document was signed by more than 800 politicians: leaders of social movements, leaders of Duma factions. Its goal was to find compromises and establish a constructive dialogue between state structures and various political forces in Russia. In February 1994, in his first annual address, the president spoke about the unacceptability of both a return to the planned economy of the Soviet model, and the continuation of "shock therapy", carried out the idea of the need to strengthen the social orientation of reforms. Prime Minister V. S. Chernomyrdin also repeatedly spoke about the need to "correct", and to correct the economic course at the beginning of 1994.

At the same time, it was the economy that continued to be the most vulnerable point of the government operating under the auspices of the President. Knowledge-intensive industries were increasingly degraded and the positions of raw materials were strengthened. Foreign and domestic debt increased rapidly. With the growth of social contrasts, the real

incomes of the majority of the population decreased. However, even at the same time, citizens put forward the growth of crime in the first place among the exciting topics. The previously unsolved problems of federal relations also made themselves felt.

On February 15, 1994, a treaty was signed between Russia and Tatarstan. It did not say that the republic is part of Russia and recognizes the supremacy of the federal Constitution. The Treaty removed some of the problems, but many politicians felt that it was a step back from the Constitution, a retreat from the constitutional Federation to an asymmetric, contractual one. Tatarstan maintained greater independence in internal affairs than other subjects, but, more importantly, stipulated special, preferential budgetary relations with Moscow. This example was contagious. In 1994-1995, other republics have also entered into agreements with the federal center. As a result, they transferred much less funds to the general budget than "ordinary" subjects, and, therefore, did not participate in solving programs that required national funding. Naturally, other regions later joined the struggle for privileges, and in fact, the loosening of the Federation.

The situation around the Chechen Republic was much more dramatic. Many politicians were aware of the negative consequences of its actual stay outside the legal field of Russia. But there was no consensus on how to fix the situation. In 1992-1994, the bet was placed on the support of the internal Chechen opposition to the regime of D. Dudayev, which, however, did not lead to the expected result. The events of November 26, 1994 were particularly tragic. When a group of

Dudayev's opponents (numbering about 2 thousand) led by U. Avturkhanov moved to storm Grozny. It was accompanied by more than 100 tanks and armored personnel carriers. But you can't take the city it was impossible, the tank column was defeated, and several dozen tankers were captured by the Dudayevites. During the interrogations, it turned out that these were not representatives of the opposition, but regular Russian officers involved in the Siets operation. Its failure has led some Moscow politicians and the military to believe that the problem can only be solved by a military operation. On December 11, 1994, with the support of tanks and aircraft, army units were introduced into the territory of the republic. They were supposed to "disarm illegal gangs" and "restore constitutional order." The calculations that the tasks set can be solved with limited forces and in a short time did not come true. The "war in Chechnya" that began, as they said, claimed tens of thousands of human lives, and became one of the most important factors in Russia's domestic policy.

The failures in socio-economic development and the increasingly outraged armed campaign in Chechnya made the government less popular, and the president often came under fire. An important indicator of mass discontent was the results of the State Duma elections held in December 1995. A total of 43 parties and electoral associations participated in the campaign, but only four were elected to the Duma. The Communist Party won 157 seats (34.9%), the Liberal Democratic Party — 51 (11.4%), Yabloko - 45 (10%) and Our Home Russia - 55 (12.2%). The election results looked extremely unfavorable for the executive branch. First, the Communists more than doubled their representation.

The secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, G. N. Seleznev, became the speaker, and his party comrades headed important Duma committees. Secondly, the LDPR and Yabloko that passed to the Duma also demonstrated opposition to the government. Third, Gaidar's "Democratic Choice of Russia" (the successor to "Choice of Russia") did not pass the Duma at all, and the pro-government PDR won much less votes than its leaders had predicted.

In this regard, the presidential elections scheduled for June 1996 were much more important. Candidates for this post were registered B. N. Yeltsin, G. A. Zyuganov, G. A. Yavlinsky, B. V. Zhirinovskiy, A. I. Lebed, S. N. Fedorov, M. S. Gorbachev, M. L. Shakkum, V. A. Bryntsyalov. The rating of the current head of state did not exceed 7-8%, while his main potential rival, Zyuganov, was supported by 20% of the population. The desire to retain the highest state post made Yeltsin particularly sensitive to and respond carefully to the prevailing public mood, and promptly solve the problems that worried people. These circumstances determined the socio-political development of the country in 1996.

In late 1995-early 1996, the president dismissed unpopular people from his entourage (A.V. Kozyrev, A.V. B. Chubais, C. M. Shakhrya, S. A. Filatova), whose names were associated with neudachi 1992-1995 In January 1996, the government called for the development of a new program of transformation, denouncing "reforms that are not aimed at people", against the uncritical use of Western experience. In January-April 1996, the President signed a series of decrees aimed at timely payment of salaries to public

sector employees, compensatory payments to pensioners, and increasing scholarships for students and postgraduates. Energetic steps are being taken to solve the Chechen problem (from the development of a peace settlement plan to the physical elimination of Dudayev and the cessation of military operations). The signing of agreements between Russia and Belarus, as well as between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, demonstrates the seriousness of integration intentions in the post-Soviet space. The President made 52 trips to the regions, and Moscow stepped up the conclusion of bilateral agreements — like the "tatarstanekogo" - now with the territories and regions of Russia, which were provided with benefits. International support is being mobilized: new loans are being promised to Russia, and in May 1996, the leaders of the "G Seven" gather in Moscow to discuss nuclear security issues. The air was absolutely dominated by the current president, who acted as a national leader.

All these and other measures have had a significant, but still limited, effect. Yeltsin managed to be elected with 53.8% of the vote in the second round, largely due to the alliance concluded with A. I. Lebed. The general, who won 14.5% in the first round, accepted the president's offer to head the Security Council and called on his voters to vote for Yeltsin. In the first round, the superiority of the acting president over the main competitor did not look convincing: despite the use of many advantages (administrative, financial, information resources), Yeltsin received only 35.2% of the vote against Zyuganov's 32%. The second victory of the first Russian president marked the preservation of the existing system of public relations.

The second Presidency of B. N. Yeltsin.

The effective functioning of the Russian political system largely depends on the president. His views, positions, as well as his ability to act and personal characteristics have a great influence on the formation of state policy in a variety of areas. During Yeltsin's second presidency, authoritarianism, the desire to stay in power, paternalism, and a departure from constructive dialogue with other structures of public power in the preparation and adoption of many important decisions became apparent.

"The presidential race-96" had a great impact on the socio-economic and political situation in Russia. Some journalists described it as "the landscape after the battle". The industrial decline accelerated, in the first half of the year "frozen" most of the number of investment projects. The government had to borrow heavily to finance the president's campaign promises (not only direct campaign expenses, but also expenses aimed at temporarily improving the well-being of voters). An IMF loan of \$ 10.2 billion was allocated for the elections, as well as \$ 3 billion in loans from Western governments. However, the main burden of expenses had to be borne by the population of Russia. In six months, the domestic public debt in the form of t-bills has grown by almost 100 trillion rubles, or \$ 20 billion. This meant that for a long time the government had to abandon the implementation of urgent budget needs in the name of paying off "elective" debts.

The forecasts of some politicians and economists, according to which after the elimination of the threat of a communist victory, investments "will flow into the country like a river", did not come true. After the elections, the West openly made it clear that the threat of the return of the Communist Party to power is not the only obstacle to investment. The main brake on economic growth was seen in Russia's political instability and the unpredictable behavior of its leaders.

The situation in the Chechen Republic, where a temporary truce was reached on the eve of the elections, escalated again, and soon the fighting resumed. On August 6, 1996, detachments of Chechen militants stormed Grozny. August 10 — the day following the inauguration-Boris Yeltsin declared a day of mourning. On August 22 and 30, Khasavyurt hosted talks between the Secretary of the Russian Security Council, A. I. Lebed, and the Chief of Staff of the Dudayev troops, A. Maskhadov. As a result, important documents were signed, according to which the parties stopped fighting, the federal government withdrew its troops from the territory of the Chechen Republic, and the decision on the status of Chechnya was postponed until 2001.

The Khasavyurt agreements caused a mixed assessment. The Chechens interpreted them as a consolidation of their victory in the war and sovereignty, since the "enemy" was leaving the territory of the republic. General A. I. Lebed saw success in the fact that it was possible to stop the bloodshed and open the opportunity to re-translate the settlement of the conflict into a political channel. Cygnus was supported by "human rights activists". However, the agreement was

sharply condemned by the generals who fought in Chechnya. The military was dissatisfied with the fact that the politicians, solving short-term tasks, did not give the troops the opportunity to "finish off the enemy". They also drew attention to the fact that the respite until 2001 was more profitable for the Chechen separatists, gives them the opportunity to find support inside and outside Russia, and better prepare for the resumption of the war (the military was also afraid of "interference" from politicians in the second Chechen campaign, but in November 2002, President Vladimir Putin assured that "there will be no second Khasavyurt").

In the summer and autumn of 1996, the political influence of the forces that supported Boris Yeltsin during his re-election increased. The Secretary of the Security Council, A. I. Lebed, was very active, making it clear that he did not consider his current position the pinnacle of his political career. The main "manager" of Yeltsin's election campaign, A. B. Chubais, was appointed head of the presidential Administration, becoming, as it was believed, actually the second person in the state. S. Chernomyrdin strengthened his position as Prime Minister. Vladimir Potanin, President of ONEXIM Bank, was invited to the government to play the role of Deputy Prime Minister. His name was associated with the concept of "semibankirschina", which meant the agreement of several of the richest and most influential Russian bankers who united in February 1996 in Davos to support Yeltsin in the elections (the term itself evoked memories of the "semi-boyarschina" — - a special body of power during the Time of Troubles 1610-1612 in Russia).

In 1996-1999, the president's medical condition became an important factor in Russian politics. Yeltsin found the news of his reelection in a hospital bed. In the autumn of 1996, he underwent a serious heart operation, and in the winter of 1996-1997, he was fighting a cold. All this led to the emergence of a specific Russian institution of support for the presidential regime, which was called "The Family". It was formed by a fairly narrow circle of people, which included some of Boris Yeltsin's family members in the literal sense of the word, and people extremely close to him or who aspired to become him, as well as those who were prepared to play by the rules of "family" politics. The emergence of the Semya was connected to the "incompleteness" of the Russian political system, when in the absence of democratic procedures for "backing up" an incapable leader their role could be performed by an informal group close to him. It assumed the function of working out the course selection of personnel. This actualized shadow political mechanisms, which contained a great risk of using them in narrow-group interests.

Having recovered from his illness, in the spring of 1997 B.N. Yeltsin returned to activity. The government was reorganized in which the key role was assigned to the two Deputy Prime Ministers - A.B. Chubais (Choice) and B. Nemtsov, (Independent) closely associated with Gaidar's "Democratic Choice" party. The new Cabinet developed a program of priority measures, known as the "Seven Main Things". It was planned to 1 eliminate wage arrears, 2 switch over to "targeted" social support, 3 introduce a level playing field for bankers and entrepreneurs, 4 limit the influence of "natural monopolies", 5 fight against bureaucratic abuse and

corruption, 6 stir up regional economic initiatives and zinform the public about the meaning and purpose of the measures taken. The course undertaken became known as the "Second Liberal Revolution".

The government has vigorously undertaken to solve the tasks, but not all the measures it proposed had received parliamentary or broader public support. The scheduled reform of the housing and utilities sector was particularly hotly debated, which meant a "shocking" increase in the prices for these services for the population: until 1997, the public was paying only 10-20% of the actual utility costs. Public attention was also drawn to the harsh and uncompromising clashes between various groups of Russian business, fighting for the redistribution of the tidbits of state property that was being privatized. In the fall of 1997, the circumstances surrounding the privatization of Svyazinvest and the partiality shown by some members of the government were widely discussed. This policy dealt a serious blow to the prestige of the government, provoking scandals and resignations.

The results of the year-long activities of the Young Reformers team have been favorably received by the press, despite the fact that the government has failed to accomplish most of its goals. The annual Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly in February 1998 stated that the government failed to cope with its tasks. However, there was no harsh public criticism of the prime minister and his deputies, so Yeltsin's decree of March 23, 1998 on the dismissal and resignation of V. S. Chernomyrdin was not followed. S. Chernomyrdin and his government looked sensational. The head of state's

lack of explanation gave many people grounds to interpret his action as a display of folly. However, it soon became clear that the president's decision was based upon his realization that the economic policy that had been in place for many years and which was associated with the premier's name, was about to collapse.

The presidential decree ushered in a prolonged political crisis. Against the background of the resignation of the political "heavyweight" V.S. Chernomyrdin. Duma's proposal that the little-known, young S. V. Kirienko be approved as prime minister looked like another "caprice" of the head of state. Although deputies approved the nominee under Yeltsin's pressure, Kiriyenko's government could not count on parliament's unconditional support at a time when the situation called for swift and decisive action.

The financial collapse of August 17, 1998 led not only to the fall of the government. On August 2], at a special session of the Duma, 248 deputies called on the president to resign voluntarily - only 32 lawmakers supported him. This time the parliament showed unprecedented unanimity and readiness to resolutely oppose the president in forming a new Cabinet. To protect the Duma from possible dissolution, the Duma members expressed their readiness to initiate impeachment proceedings. Under the threat of losing power, Yeltsin was forced to relent. On September 10, 1998, he nominated Academician Yevgeny Primakov, who was then the head of the Russian Foreign Ministry, to be Prime Minister. It was the first time that the head of state had appointed a Duma-proposed candidate to head the government: he was simultaneously nominated

by the Communists and Yabloko; other factions also supported him. It is indicative that Primakov was confirmed at the first attempt, receiving 315 votes instead of the necessary 226.

The inclusion of the Communist Yury D. Masliukov as Deputy Prime Minister gave grounds to speak about the "fielding" of the executive branch, although on the whole, the Prime Minister and the new Cabinet aspired to be politically neutral. In an effort to avoid possible accusations, Primakov did not broadcast any broad programs, sticking instead to the tactics of solving concrete cases. At the same time, the government did not embark on radical course changes. The importance of broad public support for the executive branch was vividly demonstrated when discussing the budget for 1999. It was the most "leftist" government since 1992, and it passed the most "tough," "liberal" budget in the Duma. Steps were taken toward supporting the real sector.

Primakov advocated state regulation of the economy, which, in his opinion, distinguished civilized capitalism from savage capitalism. The time of Primakov's premiership is characterized in Russian political history as a period of "dual leadership. The president, who had lost his former popularity, remained the head of state with enormous powers. The other leader was the prime minister, who had the support of the majority of the Duma and enjoyed authority among businessmen. His influence and popularity were also growing due to the prolonged recesses of Yeltsin, who was often ill. Within 8 months, he managed to achieve some positive changes in the economy, but, most importantly, to stabilize the

socio-political situation. The more unexpected was the decree on the withdrawal of. Something? The reasons for this seemingly irrational step were later revealed.

Primakov managed to become a major and fairly independent political figure in a short time. Trying to remain in the political "center," he was in no hurry to throw all of his authority behind a president who was no longer very popular. Thus, the Kremlin could not be happy that the Duma, which was loyal to the premier, did not refuse to impeach the president in May 1999. *To succeed, the planned action required collecting 300 votes for one of the five indictments.* There were 240 deputies in favor of declaring Yeltsin guilty of signing the ✓ Belovezh Agreements (Minsk Agreement, brought about the end of the Soviet Union. It was concluded on December 8, 1991), and 72 against.

✓ The guilt in the tragic events of the autumn of 1993 was counted by 263 deputies, and 60 did not agree with this.

✓ The accusation of unleashing war in Chechnya was supported by 283 deputies; 43 did not share this opinion.

✓ He was accused of disintegration of the army by 241 deputies; 77 deputies voted against him.

✓ Implementation of policy of genocide against the Russian population was blamed by 238 deputies; 88 deputies voted against it. Actually three quarters of deputies expressed political mistrust towards Yeltsin. The results of the vote reflected the mass public mood: according to polls, at the end of 1998, *85 percent of those polled linked overcoming the crisis in Russia to the resignation of the incumbent president.*

However, impeachment was not the main reason for the

removal of E.M. Primakov. Yeltsin's inner circle doubted him as a possible successor to the presidency, elections for which were due in a year, June 2000. On more than one occasion, the Prime Minister has spoken out against corruption in the highest echelons of power. In the winter of 1999, Prosecutor General Y.I. Skuratov gave the go-ahead for an investigation of a series of cases in which well-known politicians could have been implicated. Such investigations were capable of producing the most unpredictable results. Already at that time, many political analysts believed that from the spring of 1999, Boris Yeltsin was in the spotlight. N. Yeltsin in the spring of 1999 was the problem of finding a successor.

The name was mentioned by Yeltsin on August 9, 1999 after he had signed: the decree on the appointment of V. V. Putin's appointment as Acting Prime Minister whose assumption of office coincided with the beginning of a large-scale operation against Chechen fighters. He led the antiterrorist operation, serving not only as an energetic organizer of the struggle, but also as a person capable of psychologically and morally uniting Russians, who began to pin their hopes for the restoration of stability, order, and the gradual improvement of their lives on the young Prime Minister. The 'young Andropov's' image appealed to many. ' The young prime minister's growing popularity was evidenced by the considerable success of the new all-Russian movement he supported. "Unity, which won 23.3% of the votes at the December 1999 parliamentary elections, narrowly beating the Communists (24.2%)”.

The political will and readiness of the Russian leadership to resolutely fight terrorism and separatism could not

automatically guarantee peace in the republic in the near future. This was largely due to the situation that developed in Chechnya by the summer of 1999. After the Khasavyurt Agreement in 1996, Chechen politicians attempted to solve three problems: consolidate society and lay the foundation for Chechen statehood; improve relations with Russia and receive compensation for damages from it; and gain international recognition for the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria.

However, they failed to achieve any of these goals. Under such conditions it was necessary to hold new elections of the president of Chechnya capable of uniting the society and conducting a productive dialogue with Moscow. The elections of January 1997 brought a convincing victory to A. Maskhadov, who received 60% of the vote, and his main opponents, Sh. The election of 'moderate' Maskhadov demonstrated the desire of the majority of Chechens to avoid excesses and created the preconditions for the normalization of the situation. At the same time, it demonstrated that part of Chechen society, especially the youth, still shared the radical moods. The split within the separatists was based on three main reasons: the struggle for power; the lack of a unified position regarding Moscow; and differences in the views on the future of Chechen society and the state. The last reason was largely connected with the religious factor.

Dudayev, and after him Maskhadov, as adherents of Islam, advocated a secular state. They were opposed by a group of radicals led by Yandarbiyev who had adopted a fundamentalist version of Islam (it was called Wahhabism). These leaders insisted on establishing a

state based on religion. In 1997, the Constitution of the Republic was amended and Islam became the state religion. The Supreme Sharia Court was established. All this cast doubt on the legitimacy of "secular" President Maskhadov, which was soon questioned by Basayev and other field commanders.

The instrumental use of religion as a tool in the struggle for power led to violent, even armed, clashes between Maskhadov's supporters and his more "right-wing" opponents. The latter tried to rely on the support of international Islamic fundamentalist organizations, which led to the internationalization of the conflict as early as 1996. Other mercenaries appeared in Chechnya, and Wahhabi supporters began to use various forms of assistance from abroad. By early 1999, there was de facto dual power in the republic, a split among separatists which had become a permanent factor.

On the one hand, this facilitated Moscow's fight against the "rebels," but on the other, it made the negotiation process extremely difficult. In addition, relatively autonomous field commanders who specialized in criminal "business" also operated in Chechnya.

Radical Chechen politicians advocated the unification of the North Caucasus based on Islamic ideology. Their main goal in mid-1999 was not even the consolidation of Chechnya's independence but the political and ideological expansion of the republics nearest to them, primarily Dagestan and Ingushetia. Basayev's invasion of Dagestan in August 1999, however adventurous, could have been used to push Maskhadov out of power in Chechnya and to finally harden relations with Moscow.

However, these plans were never fulfilled, as the situation was changing in Russia.

§ Section 4: Russian Culture in the 1990s.

General conditions for the development of culture

The development of Russian culture in the 1990s was greatly influenced by the complex processes taking place in the economic, social and political spheres. State regulation of cultural life was carried out primarily on the basis of the "Fundamentals of Legislation of the Russian Federation on Culture", approved in 1992. The document defines that the duties of the state in the field of culture include; development and implementation of federal state programs to preserve and develop culture, creating conditions for development of national cultures of the Russian Federation, ensuring access for citizens to cultural activities, cultural values and benefits, freedom and independence of all subjects of cultural activity.

Special acts (laws, decrees, resolutions) specified the policy in certain areas of culture. In the 1990s, the Laws "On Librarianship", "On the Museum Fund of the Russian Federation and Museums in the Russian Federation", and "On State Support for Cinematography in the Russian Federation" were adopted. There were federal programs for preserving and developing culture and the arts (1993-1996, 1997-1999, 2001-2005). However, the most acute problems are still the implementation by the state of the extensive list of its social obligations, their resource provision, and the

creation of organizational and legal mechanisms for their implementation on federal, regional and municipal levels.

In these years there have been radical changes in the management of culture. If previously the monopoly role here was played by the state, now the focus of attention was the activation of internal forces of culture-> and strengthening the self-organization of cultural processes. We are talking about feudalization, the rigid framework of administrative system control, bureaucratic traditions, about increasing the autonomy of cultural institutions and its creators with increased control from civil society. In this connection the following principles of modern cultural policy are distinguished. Firstly, the problem-target orientation of cultural policy, which implies the solution of problems in the definitions of cultural sphere, as well as issues related to socio-cultural activities of specific groups and categories of population. Secondly, self-organization of cultural life. Thirdly, ensuring diversity, polyphony of socio-cultural life, which implies multi-subjectivity of socio-cultural activities, alternative projects, programs, concepts, ideas.

The practical implementation of the goals and principles of cultural policy in contemporary Russia faces great difficulties. It is worth noting the considerable complexity of the changes taking place in Russian culture. Positive changes are contradictory and conditioned by its liberation from ideological dictate, artists' acquisition of unprecedented freedom of creativity, intensification of cultural exchange, decentralization of management of the process of creation, distribution and consumption of spiritual and cultural values. Establishment of positive changes does not remove the issue of crisis state of

culture, expressed in information and cultural isolation of some regions, deterioration of material base of culture and preservation of monuments, museum exhibits and archival collections, reduction of human potential and outflow of workers to other sectors, migration abroad. The result of the reforms was the alienation of many people from the riches of national culture, the reduction of opportunities for the reproduction of various subjects of cultural activity, and the loss of control over important processes in this sphere.

Already in 1992-1993 the allocations for culture were small. However, the situation changed radically in the mid-90s, when the budgetary funding of the sociocultural sphere was drastically reduced. The development of the sector took place under conditions of a significant shortage of resources. In 1995, the financing of culture decreased by 40% as compared with 1994, and in 1996 - by 43 as compared with 1995.

Education and science

The lack of financing (in 2000 - 40% of the level of 1991) predetermined the crisis state of the education system. In 1992 the Law "On Education" was adopted, according to which the level of compulsory school education was lowered to 9 grades (in the USSR compulsory full secondary education was provided). Competitive selection for the tenth grade left many children out of school - in 1995 there were 1.5 million of them. And although later by presidential decree the competition was cancelled, the negative results of the previous decision could not be overcome. The modern school

also plays a role in the development of the social class structure, deepening social polarization of society. The deterioration of the economic situation of significant social strata has reduced the opportunities for education of their children. The emergence of "additional educational services" (usually for a fee) in high schools, and the opening of fee-paying schools, gymnasiums, and lyceums, are already reproducing social inequality at the level of young people.

Higher education also tried to adapt to the new conditions. Between 1992 and 2000, the number of state universities increased from 535 to 590. Especially popular were "market" professions: economist, financier, manager, lawyer. New non-state, mostly for-profit institutions of higher education were also training in these and some other specialties. From 1993 to 2000, their number increased from 78 to 349. However, between 1992 and 1995, the total number of students was lower than in the Soviet period, averaging just over 2.6 million per year (in 1991 it was 2.8 million). Then there were more and more students who wanted to study, and in 2000 the number of students exceeded 4 million.

In the Law "About education" of 1992 ideas about its de-ideologization and variability were carried out. Approval of these principles were contradictory. De-ideologization of education often amounted to replacing the communist ideology that dominated the Soviet school with liberal ideology in its extremely simplified, vulgarized form. Variation, on the other hand, proved to be a means of undermining the statewide standard. Hundreds of new textbooks and manuals appeared, primarily for

humanities disciplines, and were being introduced into the classroom without proper prior testing. Many of the ideas contained in them received mixed reviews from the scientific and pedagogical community.

By the beginning of the new millennium, ideas had been formed about the main directions for modernizing the entire Russian system of education. Its goal is to make the transition to a system of quality indicators and standards of education at all levels comparable with the world system. Schools will be of 12 years' duration: ten classes will be compulsory for all, the last two will be specialized education. Children will start studying at the age of 6, and at 16 they will get a school-leaving certificate. After that the pupil must decide whether to go to a vocational school or continue education in a senior, specialized school. Transition to "twelve years" is planned to be carried out by the 2006/07 academic year. The system of final and entrance examinations will be completely changed. In 2005 they will be replaced by the unified state examination (USE), which will be held outside universities and schools. The principles of financing universities will also undergo significant changes: every potential student must receive a State Individual Financial Obligation (SIFO), the total number of which will determine the scale of financing a university depending on its demand and popularity. In 2002, 17 regions participated in the experiment of introducing the CSE (in 2001 there were 5 regions). Testing of the RGB mechanism has also begun.

The 1990s were very difficult for domestic science. A sharp reduction of investment in basic research and R&D (research and development) had a negative impact

on the state of both natural sciences and humanities. The number of people employed in science and technology has decreased by more than 2.5 times, from 2.1 million in 1990 to less than 800,000 in 2000. The inflow of young specialists in science has decreased to a critical level: at present, the average age of doctors of science is over 60, while that of candidates of science - closer to 55. Over 50,000 scientists (primarily mathematicians, physicists, chemists, biologists), forced to leave Russia, are working in other countries. The material and technical base of science is extremely insufficiently renewed, and its information support has decreased.

According to the 1996 "Law on Science and State Science and Technology Policy," spending on civilian science should be at least 4% of the expenditure part of the budget. However, this has not been achieved. Under these conditions, the notion that priority funding should be given to those branches of science, in which Russia already occupies a recognized position in the world, as well as to those spheres, which are able to ensure a technological breakthrough in the domestic economy, is strengthened. The implementation of such federal initiatives as the Russian Space Program, the Conversion Program, Electronic Russia is aimed at this. In recognition of the achievements of Russian science, the Nobel Prize was awarded to the renowned physicist Academician J.I. Alferov.

Spirituality

Problems of spiritual development of society. The

creation of a strong state, the effectiveness of government, and the pursuit of viable policies based on the creative energy of society are impossible without a vision of common ideals, goals, and values. However, in the 90's the situation in this sphere remained dysfunctional. Sociologists establish a profound sociocultural crisis in Russian society. It is characterized by a disintegration of the customary worldview and social and cultural values; destabilization of people's social status and social structures, which leads to conflicts of different value systems. In what way has this crisis manifested itself?

First, it manifested itself in the loss of the old socialist and communist ideals, which, with all reservations, had also shaped the Soviet person's worldview. After 1991, the path that the country traversed in the 20th century began to be interpreted more and more broadly. This increasingly interpreted it as a mistaken path and a dead end, and this made the meaning of many people's lives questionable. At the same time, the idea of "democratic reforms" along Western lines proved unable to serve as a unifying ideal, especially since the early years of economic and political transformation prevented many people from feeling the benefits of a radical change in the social order. A negative impact on the consciousness also had a collapse of the historical Russian state, the actual loss of the country's status as a great power, which previously was justly proud of.

Secondly, there was a moral crisis in much of society. Shifted the concept of good and evil, duty, honor, conscience; blunted feelings of shame, compassion, love, friendship, comradeship. Gone in the past is the

type of morality associated with collectivism, the desire to be useful to society. At the same time the importance of individualistic values of egoistic orientation has grown. The notion of such a previously fundamental value as labor has been eroded. The changes taking place distorted people's morality and social orientation, which was reflected in a change in the prestige of the professions. Scientist, engineer, pilot, doctor, teacher gave way to banker, entrepreneur, security guard, showman, or even prostitute. The "attractiveness" of the second group of professions was associated with the perceived ability to make money quickly and easily, to demonstrate standards of high levels of consumption. Such a value as social justice was even more devalued in the public consciousness. The neglect of this value by the Soviet Communist Party and state bureaucracy could not be compared with the capabilities of the "New Russians" and the "oligarchs".

The crisis of culture was also evidenced by a blurring of ideas about socially acceptable norms of behavior. In practice, this led to permissiveness, which fueled a rise in various forms of crime, from petty hooliganism and drug addiction to organized crime and contract murders.

The Russian ruling elite was concerned about the lack of a common ideal and the crisis of values. In 1996, the Russian president called for an intensification of the search for a national idea for modern Russia. This task, however, has not been solved to this day.

The departure from the authoritarian system of governance and organization of spiritual life contributed to the formation of a whole system of subcultures, i.e.

"culture in culture," with its own, clearly delineated, boundaries of knowledge, norms, values, perceptions, tastes, ideals, and traditions. Sociologists distinguish several major subcultural systems in Russia in the 1990s. These are the ✓"high" intelligentsia culture, developing the historical tradition of Russian national elite culture; ✓"Soviet" culture, continuing the tradition of the past decades and based on a set of values, images, symbols of the older and middle generations; ✓Western culture of liberal values, socio-cultural individualism and economic independence, covering a significant part of the youth, entrepreneurs and intellectuals; ✓marginal subculture of the social bottom.

A certain consolidating influence in the 1990s was exerted by the spread of religious views. The rejection of the ideology of militant atheism in the second half of the 1980s greatly increased the educational, ideological and social role of the Church. The practice of the observance of believers' and atheists' rights within the constitutional framework of a secular state was established. Leading political parties and movements, including the Communist Party, demonstrated a loyal and respectful attitude toward religion. It can be argued that the atheistic extremism of past years has been overcome, and Russian society is gradually restoring historical continuity in the spiritual and religious sphere. The adoption of the Law "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations" in 1997 strengthened the legal framework for the activities of the Church in the country. The number of registered religious organizations increased 3.5 times, from 4,846 (1992) to 17,427 (2000).

Under these conditions, the level of religiosity of the

population increased. This increase was particularly intensive in 1988-1992. Since the mid-1990s, the upward trend in the level of religiosity lost its former momentum, and at the end of the decade it stabilized. According to sociologists, the ratio of the religious to non-religious population is approximately 2:1. If we divide believers by confessions, the ratio of groups is as follows. Of every 100 citizens of Russia, 29 are non-believers, 49 consider themselves Orthodox Christians, 8 are followers of Islam, 2 belong to other confessions, and 12 believe "in their own way" and do not consider themselves adherents of any confession. The level of real religiosity is assessed differently, but the Church is seen as an important traditional, historical institution that has a stabilizing effect on society.

A huge role in shaping the spiritual climate in society belongs to the mass media. In the years of reforms, their functions have changed dramatically. The structure of periodicals, their volume, content, and political and informational orientation have become different. In 1990-1999, the number of newspapers increased from 4808 to 5535 titles. But at the same time, the single circulation decreased from 166 to 104 million copies, and the annual circulation decreased by 5.4 times. For the majority of families, subscribing and purchasing periodicals has become inaccessible. The supply of magazines and newspapers to libraries, schools, universities, research institutes and cultural institutions was extremely limited. The production of magazine products has undergone similar changes.

At the same time, the role of television, in the information space of which virtually the entire Russian population is

included, has increased significantly. In the 1990s, new all-Russian channels appeared; a network of regional TV companies was formed; an unusually wide range of information and entertainment programs became available. Two main points of view on the role of the media prevail in today's society. One views them as an organ of power, the other - of civil society. Hence there is a "double standard" in the assessment of their activities, based on the complex interaction between the two main functions.

The assertion of freedom of speech in the media has not always been painless. The media's sometimes conspicuous partisanship, their transformation into a polyphonic narrative, their multi-voiced approach to assessing the facts, their tendency to sensationalize or conceal them, have had a negative impact on the public perception and have created a skeptical attitude towards them. The right to freedom of speech often conflicted with the right to receive truthful information.

Artistic creativity in Russia. Complex, multifaceted processes were taking place in Russian art and in the sphere of artistic creativity. Among the most visible features of the 1990s can be attributed to commercialization, the absence of ideological constraints, the tremendous influence of Western mass culture.

The last decade of the XX century has been marked by the return of artistic works, previously inaccessible to Russian citizens. This has been aided by the rapid development of private publishing. On the shelves have appeared previously banned works of prominent

Russian writers, poets and thinkers - A. Akhmatova, M. Tsvetaeva, P. Vasilyev, V. Nabokov, M. Bulgakov, A. Solzhenitsyn, I. Brodsky, V. Maximov and many others. Russian readers have an opportunity to get acquainted with the works of world literature, which previously in the country had not been published before. The new newspapers and magazines are designed for a variety of tastes. Ties with Russia have been restored by cultural figures who had previously left the country. Enormous work on the preservation of cultural heritage and the return of Russian works of art lost in different years was carried out by the Russian Cultural Foundation.

The development of Russian realistic traditions in literature continued. In this direction continued his work V. Astafiev, V. Rasputin, M. Alexeev, Yuri Bondarev, Baklanov, etc. At the same time, writers working in a postmodernist manner became very popular. Among the most readable - V. Voinovich, A. Bitov, T. Tolstaya, D.V. Voinovich, A. Bitov, D. Prigov, V. Pelevin, V. Petsukh, E. Popov, L. Petrushevskaya.

For adherents of this direction the refusal of sociality and moralism is characteristic. The aesthetic significance of literature is brought to the forefront. At the same time, the authors are skeptical about the possibility of the existence of a social ideal. Among the features of this "literary" literature are the following: irrelevance of the place of action, social affiliation of the characters, aphoristic text of the work, the absence of a certain idea and the irony that pervades the entire work. New economic realities had a noticeable impact on the development of Russian cinematography. A lack of state support led to a sharp drop in the production of films. As

a result, western films dominated the market in the 1990s. Both experienced and novice Russian filmmakers faced the problem of the economic viability of film. Commercialization of this art form has had an impact primarily on its themes and styles. If the "criminal and detective" features of the 1990s found a sufficiently "colorful" reflection, the question of a positive "hero of our time" remains open. In Russian cinema, however, a significant resonance received films directed by N. Mikhalkov, P. Lungin, V. Todorovsky, A. Rogozhkin, E. Ryazanov, S. Bodrov, V. Hotinenko.

The All-Russian Film Festival "Kinotavr" is held annually in Sochi. In the late 90s, the International Moscow Film Festival was revived. Russian TV series rapidly developed, but without much thematic diversity. Musical art was further developed. On the one hand, connoisseurs of classics had the opportunity to attend concerts of outstanding conductors and performers of symphonic works, operas and ballets. On the other hand, the 90's were a time of rapid development of a new youth musical culture, characterized by a great variety of styles and reaching the widest audience.

Many colorful theatrical productions appeared in this decade. Along with the well-known theatrical companies, new theaters and studios were created. The anthreprise performances revived. The audience was more often attracted by original directorial decisions, the play of old and new theatrical "stars". The variety of forms, styles and themes was also inherent in the fine arts. In general, the development of culture reflected the incompleteness and inconsistency of Russian transformations of the 90s. The prospects for the

country's spiritual and cultural progress directly depend on the success of the reforms initiated.

§ 5. Foreign policy of Russia in the 1990s

Concept Formation

The collapse of the USSR was the most important event of international life at the end of the 20th century. It had a huge impact on the system of international relations. The bipolar world and the long-term conflict between two social systems was to be replaced by a different organization of international life, reflecting a new balance of power and corresponding to the global challenges of our time.

Russian society did not easily come to terms with the post-communist reality. Discussions about foreign policy priorities were related both to an evaluation of the state of international relations and to fundamental ideas about the paths of Russia's future development. For some time, euphoria reigned in the public consciousness. Politicians expected that a radical turn from confrontation to rapprochement with Western countries would automatically change their attitude toward Russia and mobilize massive political support and economic assistance. Under these conditions, the focus was on accelerated integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures.

In the first half of the 1990s, the policy of Atlanticism was theoretically substantiated and practically implemented. The Atlantic foreign policy concept was based on an

- ✓ orientation towards the Western model of development,
- ✓ a non-confrontational vision of modern international relations,
- ✓ a denial of the primacy of force in solving international problems,
- ✓ optimism in assessing the collapse of the USSR and the international situation, and international problems, The U.S., Western Europe were presented as the main allies and partners both in the international arena and in carrying out democratic reforms in Russia.

In the West, the situation was perceived differently. Our country was considered to have lost the Cold War, was in no hurry to establish a "strategic partnership", and they certainly did not see Russia as an equal ally. At best, Russia was seen as a junior partner, while any manifestation of independence was seen as a relapse into Soviet "imperial" policies. On ignoring Russia's interests was evidenced by NATO's expansion of its borders and its opposition to reintegration trends in the post-Soviet space. Russia remained isolated from the West by visa and customs barriers, its markets were protected by high tariffs, quotas and other regulators. All this had a sobering effect on the Russian political elite. Criticism of Atlanticism among politicians began to grow louder in mid to late 1993.

In the mid-1990s, the conviction that a firm defense of national interests should become the only reliable guideline for foreign policy grew stronger. Greater realism emerged in assessing the consequences of the collapse of the USSR and the situation in the world. Views on the establishment of a multi-polar world, in

which no one power, not even the most powerful one, can absolutely dominate, were being asserted. An analysis of reforms inside Russia led to the conclusion that it would be unproductive to copy the Western experience without careful consideration of the specifics of one's own country. Awareness of Russia's geopolitical, cultural and historical specificity revived interest in the ideas of Eurasianism, which were also used to justify the foreign policy strategy.

The assertion of ideas about the multipolarity of the emerging system of international relations, the departure from Atlanticism, and the transition to a multidirectional foreign policy were associated with the name of E. M. Primakov. In 1996, after the resignation of Anton Kozyrev, Primakov became head of the Russian Foreign Ministry.

The implementation of an effective foreign policy was also hampered by the failure to resolve a number of important organizational problems. One of them was the departure of experienced diplomats from the Foreign Ministry for better-paid positions in private business. This has affected the work of the Foreign Ministry. Speaking at the collegium of the Foreign Ministry in October 1992, B. H. Yeltsin said: "In Russia's foreign policy, unfortunately, there is a lot of improvisation, and inconsistency. There are mistakes and miscalculations. The trouble is that the Foreign Ministry follows events and rarely anticipates them. There is a lack of information, a lack of analysis and, most importantly, lack of action. Where have the thinkers, analysts and practitioners gone - all of them proved incapable under the new conditions? ... What is troubling? Russia is now

perceived in the West as a state which only says 'yes', a state which sometimes does not notice how others do not fulfill their obligations to it, silently tolerating offenses, even insults.

Changed external and internal conditions of Russia's existence posed new challenges in the coordination of international activities between its various subjects. General issues of interstate relations were handled by the Foreign Ministry; the military structures had their own vision of foreign policy; the emerging Russian business claimed its priorities; the subjects of the Federation also significantly intensified their foreign policy activities.

Meanwhile, no single form of organized representation and coordination of the interests of all the groups active in this area had emerged in the country. For example, in November 1993, the SVR leadership opposed NATO's eastward expansion, while the Foreign Ministry stated that it did not threaten Russia. That is why, in early 1995, the president directly put forward the task of "improving the coordination of foreign policy activities" in his Address to the Federal Assembly. However, the Council on Foreign Policy, established by Boris Yeltsin in late 1995, did not manage to accomplish this task in full.

Russian-American relations

Relations with the U.S. occupied a key place in Russia's foreign policy in the 1990s. On the whole, they have noticeably improved. At the same time Russian-American relations have been a complex web of interaction, searching for areas of common interest and

disagreement on concrete issues of international and bilateral relations. The interaction of the two states was influenced by differences in their economic and political capabilities. It was difficult for Russia to claim the role of a global power. Compared with the USSR, it has a more modest economic potential. Its national income during the crisis has halved and, according to optimistic estimates, is 8-9% of that of the United States. Russia's military expenditures have decreased tenfold compared with the mid-1980s. In addition, as a result of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, it has lost its former allies and has not acquired new ones, while the U.S. has strengthened its leading position in the post-Cold War military-political blocs in Europe and Asia.

The new nature of Russian-American relations was reflected in two documents of 1992. Declaration of the Presidents of Russia and the United States and the Charter of Russian-American Partnership and Friendship. They stipulate that the parties refuse to consider each other adversaries; share the commitment to human rights and economic freedom; support for Russia's policy of deepening reforms; continue the arms reduction process and cooperate in maintaining strategic and regional stability.

U.S.-Russian political ties have considerably intensified. Meetings between the presidents of the two countries have become regular. Inter-parliamentary contacts and interaction through other government agencies and departments were revived. All this allowed important results to be achieved.

Cooperation in the sphere of arms reduction actively

developed. In 1992, the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (START I), signed a year before, was ratified, and in 1993, the START II Treaty was signed. The parties reached a framework agreement stipulating radical reductions of nuclear weapons.

5578 U.S. and Russian nuclear arms by the beginning of the 20th century. Cooperation in the safe destruction of nuclear and chemical munitions, as well as nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missile technology, became an area of bilateral interaction.

The beginning of market reforms in Russia opened up significant prospects for cooperation in the trade and economic sphere. A number of Cold War-era restrictions were lifted, and a contractual and legal basis for economic cooperation was created. The 1993 Russian-US intergovernmental Commission on Economic and Technological Cooperation (known by the names of its co-chairmen as the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission) became a working mechanism for solving problems in this sphere. In total in the 1990-s over 200 bilateral documents were signed, including the major intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements in various fields.

U.S.-Russian cooperation in resolving acute regional problems unfolded. This concerned overcoming the consequences of the crisis in the Persian Gulf, Angola and Nicaragua. Russia and the U.S. have cooperated as co-chairs of the Middle East peace conference. The issue of limiting supply of weapons to the "third world" countries was discussed, the search for normalization of

situation in Afghanistan, the former Yugoslavia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Cyprus was intensively conducted.

In the mid-1990s there is a definite evolution in Russian-American relations. The deliverance from the threat of a Communist restoration in Russia as a result of the 1996 presidential election led to a tightening of the U.S. administration's dialogue with Moscow on controversial issues. The U.S. sought to implement its plans to restructure international relations in the spirit of monocentrism and American leadership. The intensification of U.S.-Russian contacts in the first half of the '90s did not lead to the removal of the contradictions that existed in their relations, many of which are quite significant.

The U.S. has increasingly moved away from supporting the traditional principles of international law, based on respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the affairs of others, toward so-called "humanitarian intervention" under the pretext of protecting the rights of human beings and ethnic minorities. The validity of "humanitarian intervention" justified by Washington was called the "Clinton Doctrine" and was tested during the armed operation in the former Yugoslavia. The NATO bombing of Belgrade led to a significant cooling of relations between Russia and the US and its allies.

Russia opposed the construction of the emerging international security system on the basis of NATO and the downgrading of the role of the UN and the OSCE in international affairs.

The U.S. refused to recognize the territory of the former Soviet Union as a zone of Russia's priority interests, and the integration impulses within the CIS were interpreted as an attempt to revive the "Soviet empire". The American doctrine of maintaining "geopolitical pluralism" in the post-Soviet area was aimed at counteracting this. Differences became more and more acute in connection with the 1972 ABM Treaty and the U.S. attempts to bypass it and abandon the restrictions. Despite the positive dynamics of economic cooperation, the U.S. discriminatory restrictions on Russian goods were not lifted, antidumping duties and quotas were maintained, and there were obstacles to the importation of high-tech products into Russia. Washington's policy of squeezing Russia out of high-tech commodity markets became more aggressive. But on the whole, in the 1990s there emerged in Russian-American relations a fairly well-organized mechanism of interaction and overcoming disagreements.

Russia and Europe

In the 1990s, the European direction of Russia's foreign policy was one of the priorities. On the one hand, the results of overcoming the cold war in Europe were particularly visible, opening up favorable prospects for Russia's active participation in the life of the continent.

On the other hand, the profound changes taking place in Europe were capable of seriously complicating its objectively inevitable interaction with our country. Among the most significant of these were German reunification; the intensification of integration processes in the western

part of the continent; the reorientation of former Soviet allies in foreign policy; and conflicts in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. The birth of Russia's new European policy was also complicated by the narrowing of its spatial area and a significant reduction in the state's economic and especially military potential. All this contained the danger of our country being pushed to the periphery of international political development.

For Russia, the most acute problem in shaping European security was the question of NATO's role in the new environment. Initially, it was widely believed that the bloc would meet the same fate as the Warsaw Treaty Organization, since the main object of confrontation of the alliance had disappeared. It was also believed that NATO would gradually transform from a predominantly military to a political security structure. In December 1991, Yeltsin declared that Russia was ready to join the organization. However, events followed a third scenario. NATO was reoriented toward new military-strategic goals, and the circling of its members was expanded around Russia. Its claims emerged for an exclusive right to make decisions on the most acute issues of European security, including bypassing the UN.

In the second half of 1993, Russia tried to counteract these trends, but not immediately. As discussions on expanding the alliance to include new members from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) began, an anti-NATO campaign was launched in Russia that for the first time brought together a variety of political forces. Western leaders were informed of Russia's strong opposition to the inclusion of CEE states in NATO. The campaign

boosted the sentiments of former Soviet allies in favor of joining the alliance, but had some influence on Western countries as well. In the discussions of the enlargement it was stressed that it should not lead to new dividing lines in Europe or push Russia back. In this regard, two parallel tasks were envisioned: the inclusion of new members in NATO and the development of relations with Russia.

In January 1994, the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program was adopted for cooperation with the countries outside the alliance. Moscow was reluctant to join the project until May 1995, but it participated formally. The Russian leadership wanted to give their country a special, more privileged status, but it failed to do so. The situation significantly worsened after December 1996, when the NATO session had sanctioned the beginning of the alliance's enlargement process. Russia was faced with a dilemma: either to continue actively opposing the process (with all the political and military consequences it entailed), or to accept its decision and try to achieve a breakthrough in Russia-NATO bilateral relations.

Under the influence of the Russian Foreign Ministry, headed by E.M. Primakov, the choice was made in favor of the second, more pragmatic option. As a result, in May 1997 the parties signed a Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security.

The document defined "the goals and mechanism of consultation and cooperation, joint decision-making and joint action, which will form the core of the Russia-NATO relationship." A NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council was created. In this way, the political and legal

foundations for making NATO-Russia relations a central element of European security were laid.

However, subsequent events showed that the sides interpreted the meaning of the reached agreements differently. While Russia was inclined to ensure that the established mechanism would make joint decisions on security issues in Europe, NATO viewed it only as a forum for joint discussion of problems, whose recommendations were not binding on the leadership of the alliance. These differences in positions were vividly illustrated by the events surrounding Kosovo in 1999.

For Russia, it was particularly painful that not just an act of aggression against its historical ally, but that it was done in spite of its active objections. The bombing of Yugoslavia showed the unwillingness of leading Western leaders to turn NATO-Russia relations into a significant component of European security. Moreover, the alliance claimed the right to use force outside its member states without UN Security Council authorization. The new "NATO Strategic Concept", approved at the Alliance's anniversary summit in April 1999, included for the first time among its tasks "crisis response operations" unrelated to collective defense against external aggression.

Russia took an active part in European affairs in the framework of the Pan-European Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the most representative structure in terms of participants and universal in terms of its functions. Unlike other European associations, it is a full participant here. On its initiative the Charter for European Security was developed and

approved at the OSCE summit in Istanbul (1999), which analyzed the challenges to be faced by the continent in the 21st century. The document reaffirmed the commitment to the Charter and the UN and did not address the issue of a "new internationalism".

No less important for Russia was the expansion of ties with the European Union (EU), perhaps the most influential organization within the framework of which the integration of member states takes place. The main area of integration development in the EU is the economy, but unification efforts are gradually spreading to other areas as well. In the 1990s, the EU acted as Russia's most important trade and economic partner. In 1997, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Russia entered into force, opening up vast opportunities to attract investment in our country. In 1996 Russia was admitted to the Council of Europe, an organization whose aim is to promote democracy and human rights protection, to develop cooperation on culture, education, health, youth, sports, information, and environmental protection. Orientation to high European standards is also important for the dynamically developing Russia.

On the whole, Russia's multilateral and bilateral relations with European states have developed dynamically and in many respects constructively, although differences remain on some important approaches. In addition to international security issues, the partners did not always find common ground on Russia's internal problems. The Chechen issue was at the center of the discussions more often than not.

In the second half of the 1990s, Russian foreign policy became more balanced. Russian diplomacy began to pay more attention not only to Western partners. Contacts with the countries of the Far East, Middle East, and South East Asia became more active.

Relations between Russia and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe acquired a new character. In 1992, the head of the Russian Foreign Ministry A. V. Kozyrev formulated the tasks in this direction as follows: "With Eastern European countries, Russia adheres to a different, fundamentally renewed strategy of international relations. It is completely free of the elements of arrogance and egocentrism inherent in the former Soviet Union and is based on the principles of equal rights and mutual benefit. The strategic task at this stage is to prevent Eastern Europe from turning into a kind of buffer belt, isolating us from the West. We also seek to prevent Russia from being forced out of the Eastern European region. However, these tasks could not be solved. As experts note, in the 1990s Eastern European countries became "a zone of coldness and mistrust" for Russia.

The leaders of the CEE states set as their main tasks the strengthening of economic and political integration with the West through gradual accession to the European Union and accession to NATO as a basis for their security. Initially, Russia did not see this as a major threat. Thus, the Soviet-Polish declaration signed in August 1993 stated that Poland's intention to join NATO "does not contradict the interests of other countries, including Russia", which was seen by many as an agreement to expand the alliance to include the CEE countries. This provision, however, provoked a critical

attitude among most of the Russian political elite and especially in the military environment. As a result, after a while, B. N. Yeltsin sent a letter to the leaders of England, France the United States, and Germany, in which he effectively disavowed his previous position.

However, the mechanism of involving new members into the alliance was launched, and, following the 1992-1998 preparatory work, in April 1999 at the NATO anniversary summit in Brussels, the alliance admitted "candidates of the first order". They were Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. It is characteristic that on this summit, dated to the 50th anniversary of the organization, the heads of all states of CEE, Baltics and Eurasia were present, almost all the heads of the CIS countries except for Russia and Belarus. Of particular concern to our country was the fact that the celebrations took place at a time when NATO aviation (from March 24) was carrying out missile and bombing strikes on the territory of the sovereign FR Yugoslavia. The approach - which had taken place and was planned - of the Alliance's borders to the territory of the Russian Federation under the new interpretation of NATO's tasks caused justifiable anxiety in various circles of Russian society.

In the 1990s, the scale of economic cooperation between Russia and CEE countries shrank considerably. Industrial cooperation was practically curtailed, and ties were mainly confined to trade, albeit on a relatively modest scale. The exception was the Baltic states, which received up to 60% of their foreign exchange earnings from Russian cargo flows. The establishment of new market-based relations was also hindered by such "legacy of the past" as the problem of mutual debts.

After the switch in 1990 from convertible rubles to hard currency in mutual settlements with the CMEA countries, the USSR turned from a creditor of the Eastern European countries into their debtor. Russia, which had assumed the debt obligations of the USSR after its collapse, owed almost all the countries of Eastern Europe. The debts ranged from a few tens of millions of convertible rubles to Romania and \$5 billion to Czechoslovakia. All this blocked economic ties between the former allies. Only in the second half of the 1990s negotiations on the repayment of debts led to constructive and mutually acceptable agreements.

While the economic aspiration of the CEE countries to join the EU was unambiguous, during this period there was an awareness of the complexity of integration into European structures. The euphoria that existed in 1991-1992 began to subside. A more careful consideration of their own capabilities and geo-economic processes led the leaders of these countries to declare their special path of European integration and relations with neighboring states, including Russia.

Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States - CIS

The first two years of the Commonwealth's existence were characterized by centrifugal tendencies, a rapid disintegration of the integrity of the former USSR space. In 1993. With the liquidation of the single-ruble zone, the common economic space ceased to exist. Political and legal systems developed in different directions. The

new states were actively establishing independent economic, political and military-political relations with third countries. By 1993 the division of the Soviet Army and the formation of national armed forces were completed.

Russian policy toward the CIS countries in the 1990s was defined by the confrontation of two trends. Some politicians believed that it was necessary to preserve the Commonwealth as a cohesive geopolitical association, with Russia playing a dominant role. The preservation and strengthening of multilateral cooperation within the CIS was seen as the main direction of Russian policy. Another approach was based on the recognition of the inevitability of geopolitical and geo-economic pluralism in the post-Soviet space due to both Russia's limited resources and its priority interest in integration into global economic processes. In the mid-1990s, the first line dominated, which was determined by B.N. Yeltsin, who in September 1995 signed a decree on the Strategic course of Russia and the member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

In January 1993, the Charter of the CIS was adopted. Coordination of activities within the Commonwealth was carried out by the Council of Heads of State, the Council of Heads of Government, and the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The Council of Ministers of Defense, the Council of Commanders of Border Troops, the Inter-parliamentary Assembly, and the bodies of sectoral cooperation. The CIS Executive Secretariat was functioning in Minsk. All in all, about 2000 various agreements were signed within the framework of the Commonwealth in the 1990s, most of which were not

implemented.

By the end of the decade, it became obvious that the CIS managed to mitigate the consequences of the collapse of the USSR, but the integration goals were not achieved. Economic cooperation between Russia and the CIS countries decreased (the volume of foreign trade turnover decreased, and neither the Economic Union nor even a free trade zone could be created). Cooperation in the military-political sphere was also unsuccessful: The Tashkent Agreement on Collective Security (1992) was not implemented in full, the Russian military presence in the CIS countries was reduced, and the concept of joint protection of borders was not realized. In the political sphere, they failed to solve the main task of turning the CIS into "a political association of states capable of taking a worthy place in the world community.

Moreover, inside the CIS there was a process of formation of multidirectional coalitions, and without Russia's participation. There was no multilateral cooperation between the CIS countries in the humanitarian sphere either.

Changes began to emerge in Russian policy toward the CIS in the second half of the 1990s. Our country began to take a more pragmatic approach to its problems. The idea of integration in the military-political sphere began to recede into the background, and there was an "economization" of ties. In 1999, Russia ceased its insistence on endowing the CIS bodies with supranational powers, which the majority of member states objected to. The emphasis was gradually shifting to the efficiency of bilateral and multilateral cooperation

within the framework of the Union of Belarus and Russia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and deepening integration in the economic and humanitarian spheres.

Russia and the Yugoslavian crisis

The outbreak of hostilities in Yugoslavia is associated with the Slovenia and Croatia declaring on June 25, 1991 their full independence and separating from Yugoslavia. It happened after referendums on the territories of these republics, in which the majority of the population voted for it. Following the declaration of independence, units of the Yugoslav People's Army (YUNA) entered the territory of the separatists.

The situation in Croatia was particularly difficult. There were many Serbs who did not want to break away from Yugoslavia. The Croatian authorities sought "self-determination" within the existing administrative boundaries established soon after the end of World War II by the former Yugoslav leader Tito (a Croatian), as well as to include the Croatian-populated lands of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the newly formed state. This led to the Croatian Serbs declaring independence from Croatia in the fall of 1991, creating a number of their own territorial entities and declaring their desire to unite with Yugoslavia. The UNA came to their aid, and in late 1991 the UN Blue Helmets were deployed where they clashed with the Croats.

The ethno-political and confessional situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina was much more complicated. The Muslim and Croatian communities sought secession

from the SFRY, which was not desired by the Serbs who lived there. As a result, in the spring of 1992 there were: The Croatian state of Herzeg-Bosnia, Muslim Bosnia and Herzegovina; they were opposed by the Republic of Srpska Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even earlier, UN forces were used on the territory of the Republic. Ethnic cleansing" also took place in clashes between the communities.

During the last year of its existence, the USSR was in favor of preserving the integrity of the SFRY and distanced itself from the events taking place there. Since early 1992, however, the situation has changed dramatically. After the United States and a number of European countries, Russia recognized the independence of Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Russia also "welcomed the will of the people of Serbia and Montenegro to live in one state," which was established in April 1992 and took the name of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). Russian foreign-policy line in the conflict in 1990-s was determined, on one hand, by the pressure of patriotic communist majority in the parliament, which demanded protection of Russia's historical ally in the Balkans, and on the other hand, by the positions of the western partners, on whose credits and political support the internal political stability of the Russian Federation leadership depended to a large extent.

Initially, Western countries sought to prevent the use of FRY armed forces to support Serbian forces in the territories of the newly emerged countries. To this end, on May 30, 1992, the UN Security Council decided to impose a sanctions regime against the FRY for its

involvement in the Bosnian conflict. At the time, Russia voted for sanctions, which hurt the FRY economy. At the same time, Russia was actively involved in attempts to resolve the Yugoslav crisis as a member of the international Contact Group (CG). However, it became increasingly obvious that the West was not an impartial party to the conflict, supporting anti-Serb forces. It was reflected in the bombing of Serb belligerent positions by NATO countries in 1994 and 1995, based on an expansive interpretation of UN resolutions, which Russia opposed. As a result of political and military pressure, the FRY (headed by S. Milosevic) agreed in spring 1995 to recognize Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia within their internationally recognized borders, and to boycott Bosnian and Krainian Serbs until a peace plan is adopted.

A wide range of problems of the former Yugoslavia were reflected in the documents prepared in November 1995 in Dayton, USA, and formalized in the Paris Accords of December 14, 1995. The agreements also provided for a military operation, according to which international forces were introduced into the region to implement the agreements. Their total strength was estimated at 60,000 servicemen, including 20 servicemen of the US. Russia stipulated special conditions for its participation in the peacekeeping force.

A new aggravation of the Yugoslav crisis began in 1998. The defeat of the Serbs in 1991-1996 led to the revival of the radical Albanian separatist movement in the Serbian province of Kosovo. In neighboring Albania, the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army (OAK) was formed. In response to its terrorist actions against Serbs, Serbian

police conducted retaliatory operations, which the Albanian side qualifies as genocide against civilians. However, with the active participation of NATO countries, the international opinion on the responsibility for ethnic cleansing, especially on the Serbian side, was being formed. The pretext for resolving the conflict by force for NATO was the discovery of the bodies of 45 Albanians killed in Racak in Kosovo. In the framework of the military operation "Allied Powers", started on March 24, 1999, in which 13 NATO member states participated, air strikes were carried out against military and civilian targets in the FRY, which caused enormous human and material losses. Two thousand civilians were killed, seven thousand were wounded, 30 percent of them children. Material damage exceeded 200 billion dollars. Bombings were ceased on June 10, 1999. On June 10, 1999, the FRY accepted a NATO ultimatum. Serbian forces were withdrawn from Kosovo, along with the international forces.

Not only Albanian refugees but also OAK fighters returned to the province. According to experts, in the current circumstances the probability of Kosovo's breakaway from the FRY has increased considerably.

Russia and the Asia-Pacific Region

The changes in the USSR and Russia in the late 1980s and early 1990s made the country's policy in the Asia-Pacific region more dynamic. 1989 was a turning point in the normalization of relations with China: in May of that year M. S. Gorbachev, during meetings on inter-state relations between the USSR and China, were

normalized. The course taken then was consolidated after the collapse of the USSR. In 1992, during the visit of Russian President Boris Yeltsin to Beijing, the Beijing Declaration was signed, confirming the will of the parties to active cooperation.

In the 1990s, relations between the two countries developed quite stably. From 1991 to 1999 there took place a total of six Russian-Chinese summits, which took place alternately in Moscow and Beijing. China has become Russia's second most important trading partner and one of the main buyers of Russian industrial products, including military equipment and technology. Russian specialists participated in the implementation of Chinese nuclear power development projects.

Russia and China managed to reach important agreements on the settlement of border issues, which for a long time had been complicating relations between the states. In 1991, an agreement was signed on the eastern segment of the Russian-Chinese border, and in 1994, on the western segment. Both treaties were ratified by the parliament. By 1997, 97% of the Russian-Chinese border was agreed upon. In April 1996, the Russian-Chinese agreement on confidence-building measures in the border zone was signed, which was joined in 1997 by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (the so-called "Shanghai Five" appeared). The parties agreed on mutual reduction of armed forces in the border area, which resulted in the creation of the strip of reduced military activity 100 km deep on both sides of the line for a distance of 7,500 km. The "Shanghai Forum" - meetings of the leaders of the five countries at the highest level to discuss issues of border cooperation

- was held regularly in the 1990s.

An important place in the development of Sino-Russian political cooperation was taken by the bilateral Declaration on a multipolar world and the formation of a new international order, signed in Moscow in April 1997. The parties declared their desire to establish an "equal partnership of trust, aimed at strategic cooperation in the XXI century". The document stated the end of the era of bipolarity and expressed readiness to promote the formation of a different multipolar structure of international relations. Russia and China condemned hegemonism as a phenomenon in international life.

Russia's relations with Japan developed quite steadily. Their importance is due to the fact that this country is the second most economically powerful in the world, and that cooperation with it in the region (as with the U.S.) is particularly important for Russia because of China's growing economic power and rising self-esteem.

At the same time, Russian-Japanese ties were burdened by a dispute over the ownership of the southern part of the Kuril Ridge. Admitting in 1956 to discuss the "territorial issue," the Soviet side, influenced by changes in the international situation, refused to do so from the early 1960s until the late 1980s. The situation changed during "perestroika," when Gorbachev visited Japan in April 1991. During the Soviet-Japanese visit in 1991, the text of the Soviet-Japanese communiqué stipulated the parties' desire for a peaceful settlement (in the form of a peace treaty) and defined its territorial aspects in the form of demarcation. The Japanese appetite was whetted by both the weakening of the USSR and the

readiness of some Soviet politicians to resolve the territorial issue quickly and decisively, in the spirit of "new thinking".

After the USSR collapse and until 1993 Japan insisted on the categorical formula - "only all and only at once", i.e. simultaneous ceding of all four islands, even breaking away from the compromise stipulated by the 1956 declaration. Even the compromise in the 1956 Declaration, which stipulated that only two of the four islands should be ceded under a peace treaty. In 1992, influenced by public criticism and objections from Sakhalin officials, Russian officials in semi-official speeches told its representatives that the Japanese demands were untimely and unacceptable. However, Japan's rigid position led to Yeltsin's visit to Tokyo in 1992 being postponed twice.

Later Japan, convinced of the impossibility of resolving the problem under the unstable political situation in Russia and strong public opposition to the transfer of the islands, softened its stance. In November 1993, during his visit to Japan, the Russian president apologized to the Japanese people for the atrocities faced by Japanese prisoners of war held in Soviet camps until the 1950s. At the same time the Tokyo Declaration was signed, in which the parties expressed their willingness to continue to seek a solution to the peace treaty problem and, in this context, to discuss the problem of the disputed islands. A new step in this discussion was the "meeting without ties" held in Krasnoyarsk in 1997 by B.N. Yeltsin and Prime Minister R. Hasimogo, at which they signed an agreement of intent to seek a resolution of the dispute over the islands before 2000. However,

the initiative did not develop further.

As early as January 1990, diplomatic relations between the USSR and the Republic of Korea were restored. They were based on the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, signed in 1992. This is so far the only time such a document has been signed with a northeast Asian state, an ally of the United States. Trade and economic relations between the two countries were particularly dynamic. At the same time, Moscow's establishment of diplomatic relations with Seoul led to a cooling of its relations with North Korea, which remained rather strained throughout the 1990s.

Russia has sought to engage in regional economic processes through participation in multilateral regional integration institutions, which became important in the Asia-Pacific region in the 1990s (there were more than 15 of them). Since 1996 Russian Federation has been taking part as a guest and an observer in the work of the structures of the most important regional organization - ASEAN embracing the South-East Asia zone. In 1998 our country was accepted into the second most important regional structure - the Asia-Pacific Economic Council (APEC).

§ 6. Russia at the Beginning of the New Millennium.

Search for New Landmarks

On January 31, 1999, Russian President Boris Yeltsin announced his resignation during the New Year address to the Russian citizens. The duties of the President, in accordance with the Constitution, were entrusted to Chairman of the Government V. V. Putin, and new presidential elections were scheduled for May 2000.

On the eve of Putin's "Russia at the turn of the millennium," the then-potential president outlined his vision of the past and his ideas about the challenges facing the country. In his opinion, first of all it was necessary to consolidate Russian society: "Fruitful and creative work, which our Fatherland needs, is impossible in a society that is divided and internally disunited. " Moreover, the author stressed, "there should be no forced civil concord. Any social consent here can only be voluntary."

V. V. Putin wrote about the importance of strengthening the state: "The key to the revival and rise of Russia today is in the state and political sphere. Russia needs a strong state power and must have it." Concretizing this idea, the author stressed: "Strong state power in Russia means a democratic, legal, and capable federal state. "

Concerning economic problems, he wrote of the need to significantly increase the efficiency of the economy, to conduct a consistent and effective social policy aimed at fighting poverty, to ensure sustainable growth of the welfare of the population.

The article talked about the importance of state support of science, education, culture, health, because "the country where people are physically and mentally

unhealthy, poorly educated and ignorant, will never rise to the heights of world civilization".

The article concluded with an alarming assertion that Russia is going through one of the most difficult periods in its century-long history: "For the first time in the past 200-300 years, it is facing the real danger of ending up in the second or even third echelon of countries". To prevent this from happening, a tremendous strain on all the intellectual, physical and moral forces of the nation is needed. Because "everything now depends on our ability to recognize the degree of danger, to unite, and tune in for a long and hard work".

Strengthening Statehood

The main ideas of the article were reflected in V. V. Putin's election platform and were supported by the majority of the citizens of the country, which was fully expressed in May 2002. When the second President of Russia was elected in the first round, winning 52% of the votes. Intensive work on improving all public structures began. Putin defined its meaning in one of his speeches, where he stated that in the 1990s, the foundations of the market economy and democratic system had been laid in the country.

According to the president, by the year 2000. Russia has acquired a number of features inherent in "not a federal, but a decentralized", confederal state. The weakening of the Center did not allow it to conduct an effective socio-political and economic course in the regions of Russia. Therefore, the task of strengthening the old and creating

a new "vertical of power" became urgent. For this purpose, as early as May 2000. By Presidential Decree, seven federal districts were established in Russia: The Northwestern, Central, Volga, Southern, Ural, Siberian, and Far Eastern districts. They were not new administrative units, much less constituent entities of the Federation. They were headed by plenipotentiary representatives of the president, who were given the responsibility of coordinating the activities of local authorities on the basis of all-Russian legislation, and of ensuring that all subjects of the Federation strictly observed the Constitution of Russia. Much work was unfolded to bring regional legal acts (constitutions, laws, decrees) in line with the federal norms. Also, the reform of the upper house of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation was aimed at raising the effectiveness of state governance.

The Federation Council, which included the heads of the executive branch (presidents and governors) and the legislative assemblies of the subjects of the Federation, has been reformed. In 2000, the seats of the heads of republics, territories, and regions were gradually taken over by their representatives, who now worked in the Federation Council on a permanent basis. The former members of the Federation Council joined the newly created State Council, a new advisory body under the RF President.

In 2000-2003, the relationship between the State Duma and the agencies of the supreme executive power changed. The conflict between the parliament and the president, typical of the Yeltsin era, had been overcome. A stable pro-presidential majority has emerged in the

Duma, which is committed to the center. In 2000, the Duma majority consisted of the Unity, Fatherland-All Russia, People's Deputy, and Regions of Russia factions, which together had 235 seats. This allowed the president to pursue a more active policy, relying on the support of lawmakers.

A new impetus was given to the reform of the Russian army. In accordance with the "Plan for the Construction of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation" (January 2001), an increase in the number of military personnel was stipulated. (January 2001) it was planned to increase their financing, while their personnel were reduced; it was planned to equip the troops with modern and advanced combat equipment. By 2010, it is planned to switch over to contract-based manning of the army. In the process of experiments in 2001-2004, the elements of this program were matured. In June 2002, the law "On Alternative Civilian Service" was adopted.

In the same year, plans for a radical restructuring of the Interior Ministry system were announced. They plan to create on its basis a municipal police (domestic crime), a federal police (threat police, traffic police, anti-organized crime and drugs, licensing and migration services), as well as the Federal Investigative Service and the National Guard. This reform has been postponed for the time being.

There have been significant structural changes in the system of state security bodies. In 2003, the Federal Border Service (FBS) and the Federal Agency for Government Communications (FAPSI) were returned to the Federal Security Service. The Federal Tax Police

Service (FSNP) was disbanded, with its tax and fiscal functions transferred to the Interior Ministry.

Work on improving the organizational and legal foundations of the activities of other parts of the state apparatus was intensified. The judicial and legal system is being modernized: in 2002, new acts regulating the activity of the court and the bar were adopted; the existing codes were intensively amended. In 2003, acts determining the main parameters of the administrative reform designed to clearly define the powers of the various levels of power and to provide them with the necessary financial sources were drafted.

Ensuring Civil Accord

Broad support for the federal troops' anti-terrorist operation in Dagestan and Chechnya in the fall of 1999 reflected the aspiration of Russians to get rid of lawlessness, ensure security, establish order, and assert stability in society. The fight against terrorists, led by then-Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, rallied the majority of Russian citizens. The newly elected president attached great importance to overcoming disunity, achieving national harmony, and developing structures of civil society in Russia.

After many years of heated debates, in December 2000 the Duma approved the state symbols of Russia. The two-headed eagle coat of arms and the tricolor flag were approved by the Duma, the Soviet-era red banners were retained for the Armed Forces, and the Great Patriotic War anthem by Alexander Alexandrov was returned as a

musical symbol. V. Alexandrov with new lyrics by the same author, S. V. Mikhalkov. This combination of elements of symbolism is intended to unite different eras of Russian history, to reconcile supporters of different political sentiments, and to demonstrate continuity and novelty in the development of the country.

In the spring of 2001, the State Duma passed a new law on political parties. The idea behind it was that parties should not be narrow regional associations, but should represent the interests of citizens at the state level. Therefore, all existing parties had to re-register within two years to prove their right to act on behalf of citizens as national associations.

In 2000-2004, much attention in public policy was paid to strengthening the institution of the president, who was seen not only as the highest official, but also as one of the personal symbols that unite society. The desire of the head of state to act as a national leader who pursued policies that took into account the positions of all social groups in order to strengthen the country as a whole was evident. Putin has often, and in various forms, spoken out to explain the measures taken by the leadership, including those that for a long time were considered unpopular. The President and the government have established a constructive dialogue with organizations reflecting the interests of various corporate and other entities. For example, a Citizens' Forum was held in Moscow in November 2001, attended by delegates representing hundreds of public nonpolitical organizations. It took decisions aimed at coordinating the efforts of representatives of public associations and state institutions to discuss major, socially significant

problems. The heated debate on the role of the media in the formation of civil society in Russia should also be seen in this context.

Economic Policy

In 2000. The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade prepared an extensive document, "*Basic Trends in the Long-Term Social and Economic Development of the Russian Federation*", which determined the strategic priorities of State economic policy up to 2010. From the first days of the new millennium, the attention of the President and the Government, led during V.V. Putin's first presidential term by Prime Minister M.M. Kasyanov, was focused on solving a series of urgent issues. Soon after his election, the president proclaimed the need to "remove the oligarchs" from power, i.e., to eliminate the unjustified privileges and hence revenues that certain businessmen enjoyed by virtue of their "special" relations with bureaucrats and politicians.

Public attention was drawn to this topic in 2003 during the investigation of the so-called Yukos affair, when many accents were made on the responsibility of big business towards the state and society. The authorities sought to create equal "rules of the game" for all participants in economic activities. The Law of the Russian Federation "On counteraction to laundering of criminal incomes". To accomplish this task, in November 2001 a new body, the Financial Monitoring Committee, was established under the Ministry of Finance. Russia joined the community of international financial intelligence.

The business climate was improved by the adoption in late 2000 of new Tax and Customs Codes, as well as additions to the Russian Civil Code. The tax scale was lowered from 30 to 13%, becoming the lowest in Europe, which created the preconditions for many sectors of the economy to come out of the "shadow". Customs import duties have been reduced. These measures have already led to a notable increase in the treasury through taxes and customs duties in 2001. However, ways of further optimizing the tax system are being discussed.

In 2000-2003, important steps were made towards deeper market reforms in the sectors called "natural monopolies". The already implemented and planned transformations in the management of the oil and gas industry, electric power industry, railway transport system and housing and utilities sector are aimed at creating a competitive environment and attracting investments, which should result in a qualitative improvement of the situation in these areas.

Many ministers of the economic block of the government assumed that state management is inefficient "by definition" and therefore the state should leave in its ownership only those facilities that are necessary for the implementation of its functions. On this basis, state-owned enterprises were further privatized, and new industries were gradually incorporated.

Of enormous economic as well as political importance was the adoption by the Duma in September 2001 of the new Land Code, which consolidated the right to own land and defined the mechanism of its purchase and

sale. The document did not affect only agricultural land. But already in June 2002 the parliament approved the law "On Turnover of Agricultural Land," which authorized the sale of this category of land as well. This law was compared in importance to the reform of Alexander II. (1855-1881, He did free the serfs and many other reforms, most of which were not much implemented.) Concessional lending for agrarian enterprises, increased supplies of machinery, and some protectionist measures are aimed to improve the situation in the agricultural sphere.

In 2000-2004, the country's leadership repeatedly expressed concern about the "raw material bias" in the development of Russian industry. The strategic goal was to make progress in industries based on modern technologies and producing knowledge-intensive products. It was pointed out that it is necessary to ensure a breakthrough in the areas where Russian science corresponds to the world level.

In this connection, the state started paying more attention to the defense-industrial complex (DIC), which traditionally concentrates a huge highly intellectual potential. Increased funding and the reforms that have begun in the DIC are aimed at solving both military and civilian problems.

New economic policy initiatives have already had a positive effect. Over the last three years, the state budget has been in surplus. This made it possible to raise the question of the preparation of the country's transition to a stable and more dynamic economic development.

Positive changes in the national economy allowed us to significantly enhance the social orientation of the policy pursued. Already by the end of 2000 the majority of long-standing arrears of wages, allowances and pensions had been paid. In 2001-2004 wages of various categories of public sector employees were raised several times and pensions were increased. The real incomes of citizens gradually began to grow. New jobs were created, which led to a decrease in the number of unemployed by 700,000 people in 2001 alone. A new Labor Code and a package of laws on pension reform were adopted. Prospects of social development were positively influenced by the increased allocations for support of scientific, cultural and educational institutions. The government pays special attention to modernization of secondary and higher schools.

New Features in Foreign Policy

By the beginning of the millennium, Russian foreign policy has completed its formative stage. The result of the consideration of the role and place in the world community and the ways of implementing the long-term national interests of our country in the international arena was the emergence in 2000 of the Russian Foreign Policy Concepts three important new basic documents. The National Security Concept contains an analysis of external threats to the interests of the Russian state. It was the basis for the Military Doctrine, which develops the provisions of this Concept in relation to defense building. The Foreign Policy Concept (2000, June) solves the same problem in relation to specific areas of

the country's foreign policy.

The essence of Russia's foreign policy is presented in a concentrated form by V. Putin in his Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation in April 2002. "We are building constructive normal relations with all states of the world - I want to emphasize this - with all states of the world. But I would also like to draw your attention to another issue: tough competition for markets, investments, political and economic influence is a norm in the international community and in today's world. And in this competition... Russia needs to be strong and competitive. Russian foreign policy in the future will also be absolutely pragmatic, proceeding from our opportunities and interests - military, strategic, economic and political. And also taking into account the interests of our partners, first of all in the CIS."

While implementing the idea of multi-vector policy, in 2000-2004 Russia kept in touch with many countries of the world in different continents. An intensive dialogue with the U.S. and other Western countries on a wide range of subjects was going on. Along with bilateral contacts, cooperation was carried out in multilateral forums and organizations ("Big Eight", NATO, OSCE, EU, IMF, etc.). In addition to visits to Western countries, the Russian president visited China, India, Japan, North and South Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, and participated in regional forums of the Asia-Pacific region.

Terrorist acts of September 11, 2001 in the USA had a great influence on international relations. They united world community in the struggle against global terrorism. The September events objectively contributed to the

realization of the important role which Russia must play in forming a new system of international security, where the priority is given to combating terrorism and the struggle for the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

In October 2001. The U.S. began a major act of retaliation in Afghanistan, where, in their view, the center of the main "culprit" of the American tragedy of September 11 was located - the Laden-led organization Al Qaeda. The key international event in 2003 was the U.S. and British anti-terrorist operation in Iraq launched on March 20. The formal pretext for armed intervention that bypassed the UN was the information that the "unpredictable" Iraqi leadership had weapons of mass destruction. However, this information could not be confirmed. The Russian leadership called the aggression "a serious mistake by the United States". The events in Iraq led to the growth of anti-Americanism in the world and caused a surge of terrorism. Once again, as after the Yugoslav events of 1999, the debate about the place of the United States in the world was rekindled. the debate on the UN's place in the structure of modern international relations was renewed.

Russia's multilateral and bilateral contacts with the CIS countries were intense. Although the level of interaction with different states varied, the focus on solving specific problems (security, joint economic projects, etc.) contributed to the pragmatism of relations between them. Our country began to pay more attention to supporting the Russian diaspora abroad. This topic was the subject of the Congress of Compatriots in Moscow in October 2001.

Problem of the Chechen Settlement

In 2000-2004, this problem also occupied an important place in Russia's political life. The terrorist acts of the separatists were not limited to Basayev's march into Dagestan in August 1999. On September 5 and 9, houses were blown up in Buynaksk (Dagestan) and Moscow. As a result, 147 people were killed and dozens injured. Commenting on all these events, V. V. Putin said: "Russia is defending itself: we are under attack. And that's why we have to give up all syndromes, including the guilt syndrome."

On September 23rd rocket and missile attacks were launched against ammunition and weapon depots of Chechen fighters near Grozny, and on September 29th federal forces crossed the border into Chechnya and launched ground operations against the armed bands. Active combat operations continued through the winter of 1999-2000. In February the federal troops captured Grozny.

In March, 2000, the commander of the Russian group, General G.N. Troshev declared the end of the military phase of the operation. However, later the complexities of guerrilla warfare manifested themselves. Although victorious during the day, the federal troops ceded the initiative to the enemy at night. In winter 2001, the leadership of the operation in Chechnya was transferred from the Defense Ministry to the Federal Security Service (headed by N. P. Patrushev).

In 2000, the federal center took decisive steps to establish civilian authorities in Chechnya. In June, the Russian President decreed to appoint A. Kadyrov, Mufti of Chechnya, as the head of the administration. The confirmation of the former active participant in the first Chechen war in this status indicates that Moscow is ready to take into consideration the existing realities in Chechnya. In January 2001, the Russian government established the post of federal minister for Chechen affairs, created a government of the Chechen Republic, and adopted the federal program for the reconstruction of its economy and society.

The Federal Program to Rehabilitate the Chechen Economy and the Social Sphere was adopted, with 14.7 billion rubles (about \$500 million) allocated to it. However, it proved difficult to implement peace plans, as militant groups fought against both the Russian military and the Kadyrov administration. The situation of the low-intensity conflict persisted, and the question of its political settlement in the new conditions remained open. Since the end of 2001, negotiations between M. Udugov, M. Maskhadov's trustee, and V. Kazantsev, the RF President's representative in the Southern Federal District, were held. However, these negotiations did not lead to any visible results.

On October 23, 2002 a group of Chechen suicide bombers, commanded by M. Barayev, and numbering over 50 people took almost one thousand spectators and actors of the musical 'Nord-Ost' hostage in the Dubrovka Theatre Centre in Moscow. The guerrilla leaders demanded that the Russian leadership completely withdraw its troops from Chechnya, threatening to blow

up the building. But in a special operation of rescuing the hostages on October 26 almost all terrorists were killed and the explosion of the building was prevented.

Although 129 hostages died as a result of the storming, it was mainly due to the use of tranquilizing gas against the background of overexertion and prolonged stress.

For the first time since Basayev's 1995 raid on Budyonnovsk, the terrorists failed to escape from the scene. The Russian authorities demonstrated their determination not to make concessions to the terrorists.

The events of October 2002 actualized the search for alternative military approaches. In November of the same year the constitutional process in Chechnya was initiated. In March 2003, the republic held a referendum in which 96% of the participants supported the adoption of the proposed draft Constitution. They also supported the idea of presidential and parliamentary elections in the republic, reflecting the population's desire to normalize the situation. In October 2003 the elections took place and the president and the parliament were elected.

The preparation of an agreement on the division of powers between the federal and republican authorities was initiated; appropriations for reconstruction of the shattered economy and social sphere were considerably increased. These measures were aimed at gradually transferring the center of gravity of the struggle against militants and establishing order in Chechnya to local structures. The Chechen diaspora in Russia and returning refugees from Ingushetia were actively recruited to address these problems. However, the events of 2000-2004 demonstrated that Moscow's new

Chechen policy still has irreconcilable opponents. In addition to the activities of militants in Chechnya itself, the country learned a new type of crime - suicide bombings. Another victim of terrorist acts was the president of the Chechen Republic, A. Kadyrov, who blew himself up on May 9, 2004, at the Grozny stadium during the festive parade.

The results of V. V. Putin's First Presidency.

As early as in March 2000 Putin outlined his action timetable for the coming years in his "From the First Person" book. "The technologists with whom we work are building a program of actions by years. The first year - formation of goals and a team; the second year and half of the third year - step-by-step achievement of concrete results; the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth year - presentation of these results and entering a new election campaign," the future president said then.

Analysis of the main events of 2000-2004 makes it possible to conclude that in general this schedule was maintained. By the middle of 2002 the socio-political and socio-economic situation had stabilized, and the main directions for further improvement of the state structure and continuation of the liberal reform of the economy and social sphere had been outlined. At the same time the character of domestic policy since the middle of 2002 was increasingly influenced by the approaching electoral cycle in 2003-2004, when the Russians were to elect a new Duma (December 2003) and the President of the Russian Federation (March 2004). Therefore, the authorities concentrated their attention on the task to

build a balance of social forces, which would allow, on the one hand, to maintain stability, and on the other hand, to achieve the best results in the elections.

This was reflected in the practice of conflict-free coordination of interests between different parts of the political, economic and regional elites. There were no loud revelations and dismissals among politicians, privatization of attractive "pieces" of state property continued, and the right of heads of regional executive power to be re-elected for a third term was confirmed. Simultaneously, the political and organizational-legal conditions for the predictable outcome of future elections were created. The presidential bodies have outlined the goal of the parliamentary elections - *to form a constitutional pro-presidential majority in the lower house. In order to achieve this goal, the Duma raised the electoral threshold for parties to enter parliament from 5 to 7 percent*, which should have made smaller associations seek an alliance with parties that have a better chance of being elected.

The amendments to the Referendum Law that prohibited holding a referendum during the year before the national election were meant to limit the ability of this institution to be used for populist electoral purposes. The convergence of the dates of the parliamentary and presidential elections made them a single indissoluble cycle, and only one month was set aside for political advertising. A campaign was launched to involve well-known journalists, cultural figures and cosmonauts in the parties, which was supposed to improve the image of the electoral associations.

The forthcoming elections also had an influence on economic policy, the limits of which were determined by the results of the preceding period and the expected deterioration of the functional conditions of the party.

The economic policy framework was determined by the developments in the preceding period and the expected complication of the conditions of functioning of the economy in 2003. In 2000-2002 it was developing in a favorable environment, largely due to the high world prices for the commodities that formed the basis of Russia's exports - oil, gas, and ferrous metals, the sale of which provided reliable revenues to the budget.

But in 2003, the drop in prices for oil (down to 17.5 dollars for a barrel) that was expected due to the war in Iraq did not happen: it remained at the level of 25 dollars. The country settled its foreign debts for 17 billion dollars, and the gold and foreign currency reserves of the Central Bank reached a record-high level in the country's history - 84 billion dollars.

By early 2004, the inflation rate had decreased considerably. In 1999, it was 36%; in 2001, it was 18%; and in 2003 it was 12%. Growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) fluctuated, amounting in 2003 to 7%. This indicator was influenced by a combination of external and internal factors. As V. V. Putin said, over these years a springboard had been created for a decisive turn in the country's economic development.

Setting new tasks. By early 2004, the president's entourage had a fairly clear understanding of the tasks that the country must accomplish and an idea of the

mechanisms by which this could be done. In order to provide a new impetus to the development of the Russian economy, in 2002 - 2003, a legal basis was created for reforming the railway transport system (MPS), changes in the housing policy (HCS), reforms in the electric power industry (RAO UES of Russia), and management of the gas industry (RAO GAZPROM). Most of these measures are among the so-called "unpopular" ones, associated with the reduction of state subsidies to curb the growth of tariffs and maintain a fixed low price for services. These changes, as well as the reform of the banking system, are recognized by experts as vital, although many of them contain the threat of social conflicts. All this forced both the executive and legislative branches of power to be particularly cautious about reforming areas that are sensitive to the mass strata of the population. For this purpose, at the end of 2003 - beginning of 2004, significant efforts were made to concentrate the power of the reformers grouped around the President.

As a result of the elections to the State Duma in December 2003, the party and political configuration of the lower chamber changed: the forces that had played a prominent role in the politics of the 1990s were weakened. The Union of Right Forces and "Yabloko" failed to overcome the 5 percent electoral threshold, and the CPRF received almost half as many votes as before (12.7 percent instead of 24.3 percent). The LDPR (11.6%) and a new alliance, the "Rodina" (9.1%), which advocated a nationalist-statist position and supported further socially-oriented market reforms, entered parliament. The biggest success was enjoyed by the United Russia party (37%), which openly declared the

majority. This party, including those elected in single-mandate districts, formed the largest faction in the Duma and headed all Duma committees. In the new Duma, the supporters of the president have a constitutional majority.

V. V. Putin's ideas about maintaining social and political stability while carrying out urgent but inevitably painful reforms found support among the population and were reflected in the voting results at the election of the President of Russia on March 14, 2004. V. V. Putin received 71,2% of votes of those who took part in elections, the candidate of CPRF N. M. Kharitonov received only 13.7%.

Electoral preferences of such a level give V. V. Putin who had triumphed over all his rivals a large margin of political strength which he used immediately when creating a new government headed by M. E. Fradkov. The very procedure for forming the new Cabinet of Ministers was part of the administrative reform: its structure and many of its functions have changed dramatically. Among the tasks to be resolved by the new Cabinet are the following: administrative and tax reforms, the reform of natural monopolies; Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization; ensuring the competitiveness of the economy through the introduction of innovative technologies.

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